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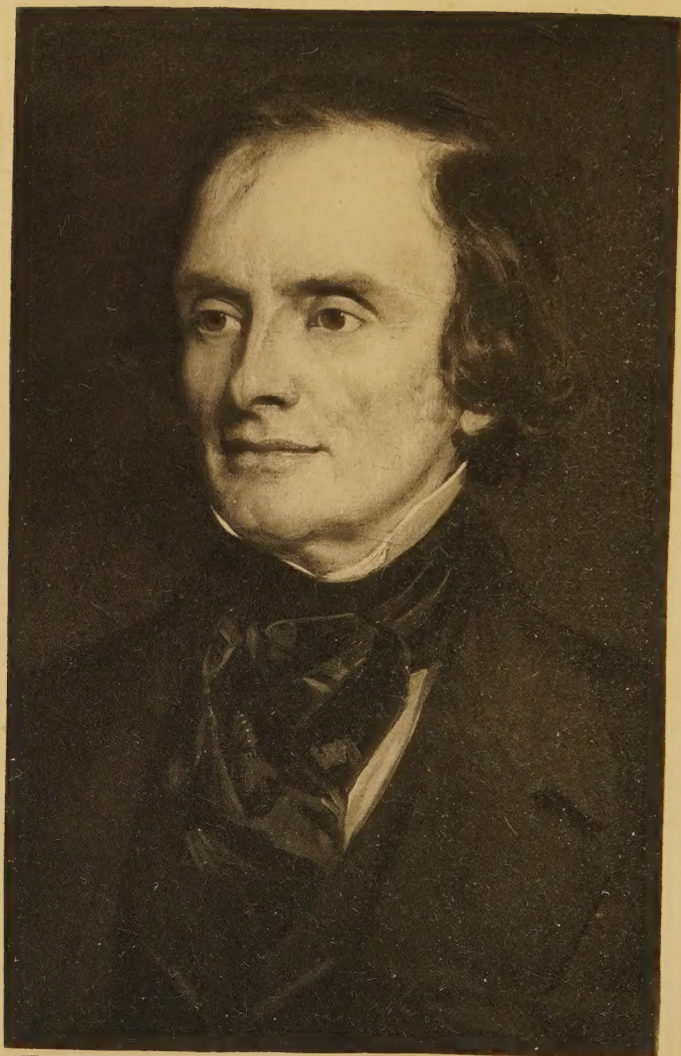
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J. G. Russell

THE LATER CORRESPONDENCE OF
LORD JOHN RUSSELL
1840-1878

EDITED BY
G. P. GOOCH

IN TWO VOLUMES

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PREFACE

'THE Early Correspondence of Lord John Russell, 1805-1840,' was published in 1913. The editor, Rollo Russell, died in the following year, leaving to other hands the duty of issuing a selection from his father's later correspondence. At the request of his trustees I have completed the task which formed the main interest of the last ten years of his life. In addition to the Russell papers, I have been kindly allowed by their respective owners to use Lord John's letters to the third Marquess of Lansdowne, the fourth Earl of Clarendon, the first Earl Northbrook, the third Lord Holland, the first Viscount Halifax, the second Earl Granville, and John Bright.

For permission to publish letters contained in these volumes I am deeply indebted to His Majesty the King ; His Majesty the King of the Belgians ; the Dukes of Wellington, Bedford, and Argyll ; the Marquesses of Lansdowne, Aberdeen, and Normanby ; the Earls of Clarendon, Minto, Northbrook, Ilchester, Bessborough, Halifax, Lytton, Cowley, and Grey ; the Dowager Countess of Granville and the Dowager Countess of Carnarvon ; to Viscount Grey ; to Lord Brougham ; to Sir George Trevelyan, Sir Charles Hobhouse, and Sir Richard Graham ; to Colonel Wilfrid Ashley, Mr. Henry Gladstone, Mr. Philip Bright, and Mrs. Cobden Unwin. Many of the plums from the Russell papers

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appeared in the admirable official biography by Sir Spencer Walpole, published in 1889, and other scholars have been occasionally allowed access for their own purposes. The present volumes must therefore be regarded not as a complete collection of the most important letters from and to the great Whig statesman after 1839, but as supplementary to those which have been published elsewhere.

The last generation has witnessed valuable additions to our knowledge of British politics during the first half of the Victorian era, and an editor in 1925 has before him a great deal of evidence which was not at the disposal of a biographer in 1889. Our insight into Lord John's personality was deepened by Stuart Reid's volume in the series of 'The Queen's Prime Ministers,' published in 1894, and a more intimate portrait was painted in the delightful 'Memoir of Lady John Russell,' published in 1910. Among other recent contributions to the study of the scenes in which Lord John played a leading part are 'The Letters of Queen Victoria,' the official biographies of Peel, Graham, Gladstone, Disraeli, Aberdeen, Sidney Herbert, Clarendon, Granville, Panmure, Newcastle, Bright, Salisbury, Goschen, Sherbrooke, Ripon, Dalhousie, Lyons, Lytton, Roebuck, Molesworth, Delane, Harcourt, the Duke of Devonshire, Henry Reeve, Robert Morier, Cardinal Wiseman, the autobiographies of the Duke of Argyll, Lord Selborne, and Lord Broughton, the Marquess of Lorne's 'Lord Palmerston,' Mr. Hobson's 'Cobden as an International Man,' and the correspondence of Greville and Reeve, while foreign publications too numerous to mention have thrown fresh light on the problems of international policy, both in the Old and the New World, with which he was called upon to deal. In the Introduction I have attempted to summarise the

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impressions left on my mind by the immense mass of unpublished material concerning Lord John Russell which has passed before my eyes. The brief introductions to the successive chapters merely attempt to facilitate the understanding of the correspondence which they contain.

G. P. G.

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LORD JOHN RUSSELL

Frontispiece

(From the painting by Francis Grant, R.A.)

INTRODUCTION

By the opening of 1840 the Melbourne Ministry had lost the confidence of the country. The Prime Minister had aged before his time, and an indolent sceptic was scarcely fitted to be the leader of the party of reform. 'He is Prime Minister only in name,' noted Greville in his journal, 'and has no authority. He is all in all at Buckingham Palace, but very little in Downing Street.' The flood-tide of enthusiasm which had swept the Whigs into power and carried through a series of great and beneficent changes had ebbed to a trickle, and the law of psychological mechanics known as the swing of the pendulum had begun to tell. Peel's star was in the ascendant, and his speedy return to power was anticipated by friend and foe. Every year, and indeed every month, that a moribund administration outstays its welcome enlarges the dimensions of the approaching catastrophe; yet at the very moment that a Ministry finds itself under sentence of death one or more of its members may be increasing their prestige and pegging out claims to lead their party and to rule the State. In the present instance political prophets had no difficulty in foretelling that the future of the Whigs was bound up with the fortunes of the great twin brethren, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. The former had

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his critics and his enemies ; but praise of the latter was in every mouth, and at the close of the session of 1840 the Clerk of the House observed that he had never seen business so well conducted as by Lord John Russell.

Before the curtain was rung down in 1841, the country was fated to pass through a crisis which brought war within sight. Since the resignation of Grey in 1834 Palmerston had been his own master ; for Melbourne troubled himself but little about the quarrels of the Continent, and no other member of his Cabinet possessed the authority or the courage to interfere with a masterful colleague. But when the divergence of British and French policy in regard to the revolt of Mehemet Ali—described by Palmerston as ‘ that aged Frenchified free-booter ’—against the Sultan of Turkey strained the relations of London and Paris almost to breaking-point, several of the Ministers awoke to their duties and claimed a voice in the issues of peace and war. It was Lord John’s first experience of an international crisis and a divided Cabinet, and his rôle was complicated by the fact that he was not only Colonial Secretary but Leader of the House, whose responsibility for the survival of the Ministry was only less than that of his chief. While the imperturbable and light-hearted Palmerston, arguing that England was strong enough to take risks, pushed boldly forward and mobilised the Powers in defence of the Sultan, Lord Clarendon and Lord Holland, who shared the Queen’s apprehensions, sharply challenged a course which seemed likely to drive the cautious Louis Philippe into the arms of the fiery Thiers. It was an anxious summer for Lord John, on whom fell the burden, which properly belongs to the Prime Minister, of mediating between the opposing forces. He supported the treaty of July 15 ; but as the summer advanced he drew nearer to Holland and Clarendon, and more than

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once he threatened to resign. Melbourne was well aware that his withdrawal would not less surely destroy the Ministry than the eviction of Palmerston, and his urgent appeals, reinforced by the delicate state of the Queen's health at this moment, were not in vain. Lord John's course earned the customary reward of reproaches from both sides ; but he found consolation in the fact that the peace of Europe was unbroken and that the Cabinet remained intact. In later years he was to earn in certain quarters the character of a *mauvais coucheur* ; but in the crisis of 1840 he displayed a readiness for compromise which was gratefully recognised by at any rate some of his colleagues.

The personal triumph of Palmerston, who, in the words of Henry Reeve, 'had bowled out everyone,' brought no accession of strength to the Ministry, and the bungling conduct of public business during the session of 1841 showed that its hour had come. Recurring deficits compelled Ministers to devote their attention to finance ; but neither their proposals nor their method of presenting them found favour with the House of Commons. Taxation was as controversial a theme as Parliamentary Reform, and Ministers differed as to the solution of the problem. They decided to reduce the duties on timber and sugar ; but Lord John's demand for a revision of the Corn Laws was resented by the Protectionist Premier, and it was only after prolonged discussion that it was agreed to substitute a fixed duty of eight shillings a quarter on corn for the sliding scale inaugurated in 1828. The proposal was welcomed by the growing band of Free Traders ; but the Conservatives were still wedded to a high tariff, and a section of the Whigs was hardly less opposed to the change. The Government had lost control of the situation, and was defeated on the sugar duties. Contrary to the advice of

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the Leader of the House, Melbourne refused to resign, and when Peel carried a vote of no confidence by a majority of one he dissolved Parliament. The rout of the Whigs at the polls terminated Melbourne's official career, and left Lord John, who now began his long parliamentary association with the City of London, undisputed leader of the party.

During the early years of his great Ministry Peel was strong enough to care little what attitude the Opposition chose to adopt. Lord John, however, continued to advance in the favour of his followers. 'He is an excellent man and a first-rate leader of a party,' wrote Hobhouse in his diary in 1843. His political opponents were no less generous in their recognition of his courage and skill. 'Lord John Russell,' observed Wellington, 'is a host in himself.' While Palmerston rarely spoke except on foreign affairs, Lord John was armed at all points, and intervened with effect in every full-dress debate. Though he never established intimate relations with the Prime Minister, their paths began to converge when Peel, whom Greville truthfully described as more of a Whig than a Tory, lost the confidence of his die-hard followers. After the collapse of the Repeal movement the Prime Minister determined on a *beau geste*; but the increase of the Maynooth grant aroused a No-Popery storm, which he was only enabled to overcome by the whole-hearted support of the Leader of the Opposition. 'Peel lives, moves, and has his being through Lord John Russell,' was the scarcely exaggerated comment of the evangelical Ashley.

The summer of 1845 witnessed the approach of a fiercer contest, in which the rival leaders were destined again to join hands. Melbourne remained an unbending Protectionist. Some of the Whig leaders,

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including large owners of property, were ready for a change before the failure of the harvest throughout Great Britain in 1845, and of the potato crop in Ireland, reinforced the arguments of Cobden and Bright. The momentous decision that the Corn Laws must go was reached simultaneously during the autumn recess by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. When, however, Peel announced his conversion to the Cabinet, he found that he could not carry all his colleagues ; and nothing was known of the intention of the Ministry when Lord John blew a blast from his horn in the Edinburgh Letter of November 22, which sounded the death-knell of agricultural Protection.

Lord John was a master of unadorned English, and no one was ever left in doubt as to his meaning. Opponents complained of the bluntness and even brutality of his phrases, while supporters rejoiced in his full-blooded denunciation of principles or practices which they disapproved. On two occasions in the course of five years the Whig leader issued a manifesto which made history. But while the Letter to the Bishop of Durham, though rapturously applauded at the time, remains a blot on his scutcheon, the Edinburgh Letter forms one of the title-deeds of his fame. It was Peel who, in the words of Bright, put the Lord's Prayer into an Act of Parliament ; but even the strong arm of Peel would have been as powerless as the eloquence of Bright and the arguments of Cobden to overthrow vested interests without the effective support of the Whigs. The moment for his intervention was well timed. Distress and discontent were increasing, and the country was waiting for a lead. Without consulting his colleagues, he cast compromise to the winds and summoned his countrymen to the fray. The decisive importance of his intervention was

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recognised by friend and foe. Bright happened to be on the platform at York as Lord John travelled south from Edinburgh, and entered his carriage for a moment to offer congratulations. 'Your letter has made the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Law inevitable; nothing can save it.'

Peel's decision broke up the Cabinet, and on his resignation Lord John was summoned to Windsor. 'The Government is like a halfpenny whirling in the air,' wrote Greville in his journal, 'with John Russell's head on one side and Peel's on the other.' His Free Trade principles presented no difficulties, for Melbourne, who alone of the Whig leaders clung to the ancient faith, was ill and nearing his end. An unexpected obstacle, however, arose in the refusal of Earl Grey, who had recently succeeded his father in the title, to serve in a Ministry in which Palmerston returned to the Foreign Office. He was fearful that Palmerston might unchain a war with America, and his right to define the conditions on which he was willing to accept office was incontestable; but he unwisely delayed his veto till the task of Cabinet-making was almost completed. Though the Queen vehemently urged his relegation to the Colonial Office, Palmerston very properly declined to accept any work but that which he loved, and the assistance of Grey was deemed indispensable in the Upper House. The latter explained to his friends that he never imagined that his decision would have such important consequences; but his conduct was generally condemned, and the Whig leader vowed that he would never again invite his assistance. The ban on Palmerston compelled Lord John, in the words of Disraeli, 'to hand back the poisoned chalice to Sir Robert,' and determined that the Corn Laws should be abolished by Peel with Lord John's

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support instead of Lord John with the support of Peel. History is from one angle a chapter of accidents, and the fame of statesmen depends on opportunity as well as on character and capacity. It is tempting to speculate on the developments which would have followed the formation of a Whig Ministry in December, 1845. The vendetta of the landowners against Peel would probably have been less fierce had he applauded the Whig executioner instead of himself wielding the axe. The paralysis of the Conservative party might have lasted for a decade instead of a generation. Finally, the fame of Lord John Russell would have stood even higher had he added the abolition of the bread tax to the passing of the Reform Bill, while the name of Peel would have lost its dramatic appeal and his career its supreme consecration.

Peel thought that Lord John lost ground by throwing up his commission; but his friends were generally pleased at his escape from a position of responsibility without power, and his own annoyance was tempered by the knowledge that success in the formation of a Ministry would have confronted him with a task calculated to dismay even the stoutest of hearts. 'It saves us from a dreadful position,' he wrote to Fox Maule; and to his wife he expressed his belief that power would come some day 'in a less odious form.' He had not long to wait, for in the following summer, after securing the passage of a Bill for the abolition of the Corn Laws within three years, the Whigs joined the vindictive Protectionists in rejecting Peel's demand for sharper weapons against Irish discontent. On this occasion the task of Cabinet-making proceeded without a hitch. Palmerston returned to the Foreign Office without protest, and the Prime Minister magnanimously broke

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his vow of non-co-operation with the man who had tripped him up six months before. The Parliament elected in 1841 was still in being, and the new Whig Ministry was dependent on the support of the Peelites ; but the situation was eased by the fact that the Protectionists, unable themselves to form a Government, preferred an honest Whig to the hated Peel.

Lord John's first Premiership represents the culmination of his career. He had reached the ripe age of fifty-four, and could look back on thirty-three years of parliamentary life, rich in legislative and administrative achievements. Next to Peel, he was by common consent the most commanding figure on the political stage. He had helped to rebuild the broken fortunes of the Whig party during the long sway of Lord Liverpool, he had played a part second to none in the decade of Whig reform, and he had rallied his followers after the defeat of 1841. His reputation had grown steadily, and he had made none of the mistakes in taste or tactics which sometimes impede the advance of public men like a dragging chain. He was resourceful in debate, and, though not an inspired orator, at great moments he rose to the occasion. Though lacking in personal magnetism and reserved in the expression of his feelings, his sterling qualities of mind and heart were recognised by those who knew him best, and he was worshipped by his wife, his children, and his step-children. At his first meeting young Algernon West found him 'alarming and cold'; but on making his intimate acquaintance the Duke of Argyll was surprised to find him 'playful, humorous, and affectionate. A more charming companion in private life could not be found.' The pluck of 'our little giant,' as Rogers called him, was proverbial. He never sought to curry favour with Delane or any other

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of the lords of the Press. He possessed the strength which comes to a statesman who knows precisely what he wants to do. After the death of the third Lord Holland in 1840 he was the living embodiment of the Fox tradition, and his life was dedicated, like that of his master, to extending the frontiers of civil and religious liberty at home and abroad. While Lord Grey's closing years were haunted by anxiety as to the long-range results of the measure which immortalised his name, and Melbourne gazed on the world through his spectacles of philosophic scepticism, Lord John never doubted or looked backward. His belief in the character of his countrymen, his veneration for British political traditions, and his unfaltering conviction of the sufficiency of Whig principles secured him an anchorage which held firm against all the winds of heaven. 'Whig,' he declared, expressed in one syllable the same meaning as 'Liberal Conservative' in seven. Greater statesmen had been and were to be summoned to the highest post; but no Prime Minister has confronted his task with loftier patriotism or a stouter heart.

Except for the Repeal movement in Ireland, Peel's Ministry had been free from the gravest anxieties abroad and at home; but the six years of the first Russell administration were a period of almost continual strain. No sooner was the new Cabinet established than it was confronted with a crisis in Anglo-French relations which recalled the agitating experiences of 1840. The marriage of the girl Queen of Spain had engaged the mind of European diplomacy for years, and an honourable understanding between the two most interested foreign Powers had been reached by Aberdeen and Guizot. Isabella, it was agreed, was to marry one of her Bourbon cousins, and, after she had children, a son of Louis

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Philippe was to marry her sister. The compromise embodied a sacrifice on both sides, France waiving her claim to provide a husband for the Queen, and Great Britain accepting the demand that her partner should not be sought outside the House of Bourbon. Had Aberdeen continued in office, history would know nothing of the 'Spanish marriages' crisis; for the British and French Foreign Ministers had healed the wounds of 1840 and established the *entente cordiale* on the basis of personal affection. Palmerston, however, who was angrily described by Louis Philippe as 'l'ennemi de ma maison,' had grumbled at the price of the *entente*, and on his return to office he gave a sharp turn to the rudder.

The candidature of a Coburg prince, though never encouraged by the British Court, had created the liveliest apprehensions at Paris; and when the new Foreign Minister in one of his first dispatches mentioned the Coburger among the claimants for the Spanish throne, Guizot and his master, fearing to be confronted with a *fait accompli*, tore up the Eu agreement and pushed forward the simultaneous marriage of the Queen and her sister. The act, as Guizot explains in his Memoirs, appeared to him the inevitable retort to an implied threat of British patronage for the Coburg candidate, and the breach of the Eu agreement is laid at the door of Palmerston; but to British eyes the momentous decision which, if the Queen had no children (for the Duke of Cadiz was rumoured to be impotent), would bring Spain under the rule of an Orleanist Prince, was an act of treachery, for which a maladroit sentence in a dispatch provided no shadow of justification. Lord John had glanced at the dispatch on a Sunday morning when he was starting for church, and, in his ignorance of the importance attached

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to the matter by the French Government, had failed to perceive its danger. After his experience of Palmerston's high-handed methods in 1840 he should have kept closer watch on his colleague's dealings with France, and he was soon to deplore his inadvertence. But his regret was quickly swallowed up in anger at the conduct of the French Government. Except for Aberdeen, who maintained his confidence in Guizot's good faith while condemning his action, British opinion from the Court downwards was incensed against what appeared to be a piece of sharp practice. 'The rottenness and duplicity of the French case,' wrote Lord Lansdowne, 'when it comes to be looked at as a whole, exceeds what I expected.' The *entente* disappeared in a moment, and with the friendship of England the throne of Louis Philippe lost its chief moral support. It was an inauspicious beginning for the new Ministry, which was to experience further shocks from the recklessness of Palmerston, and was ultimately broken by the attempt of its head to assert his legitimate authority.

While the dispute with France was at its height, a more poignant problem claimed the anxious attention of the Prime Minister. The partial failure of the potato crop in Ireland in 1845 had weighed on Peel during the closing months of his Ministry; but its almost total failure in 1846 brought a poverty-stricken and overpopulated island within sight of starvation, and called for immediate steps on behalf of the Government. Lord John had appointed as Viceroy Lord Bessborough, himself an Irish landowner, who as Lord Duncannon had served with him on the committee which drafted the Reform Bill. Bessborough, however, was in failing health and died in the spring of 1847, when the abler Clarendon succeeded him. Labouchere, the Chief Secretary,

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was hard-working and efficient, and Charles Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was profuse in counsel and warning. But the main burden of dealing with what he called a thirteenth-century famine and a nineteenth-century population fell on the Prime Minister, who spared no effort to learn the truth, to choose the right path, and to carry out measures of relief with promptitude and generosity.

The catastrophe was so colossal in its dimensions, and decisions had to be taken with such rapidity, that mistakes were inevitable; and the tenacious memory of Irishmen recalls the lives that were lost, not the lives that were saved. Lord John promptly suspended the four-shilling duty left on corn; but it is argued that the Navigation Act should have been suspended at an earlier date, that many of the relief works were useless, that more labour should have been employed on railways and less on roads. Perhaps Peel, with his experience of Irish administration and his *flair* for finance, might have been more successful. 'The Whig leader,' wrote Cobden in 1846, 'is great upon questions of a constitutional character; but his mind is less adapted for the mastery of economical questions, and he attaches less importance to them.' Yet Mr. Herbert Paul is probably right in contending that, given the circumstances of the two countries, no Government could have done more. The number and length of the letters which passed between London and Dublin, and between the Prime Minister and his colleagues at home, prove at any rate that he was lacking neither in sympathy nor courage. At the bidding of Lord Clarendon he reluctantly carried an Arms Bill in 1847; but even before the famine he had convinced himself of the need for reforming the land system. When the crisis was over he attempted to sub-

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stitute solvent for insolvent landlords by the Encumbered Estates Act of 1848 ; but his attempt to secure compensation for tenants' improvements was defeated.

No sooner was the Irish famine at an end than a fresh danger emerged nearer home. Chartism had reared its head and formulated its Six Points during the Melbourne Ministry ; but it was not till 1848 that the governing classes had cause for alarm. The wave of revolution which started at Paris in February and swept over half Europe never reached the shores of England ; but the condition of the working classes was deplorable, and the little party of direct action determined to seize an opportunity that might not recur. A monster demonstration was to be held at Kennington Common, and a monster petition was to be presented to the House of Commons. The unconcealed determination to overawe the Government by a display of force called for a vigorous defence, and the monster meeting was declared illegal. On this occasion the main responsibility rested with Sir George Grey, the Home Secretary, who arranged his plan of campaign in co-operation with Wellington. The dreaded tenth of April came and went, and the country breathed a sigh of relief when it learned that the petition had been brought to Westminster in a cab. The firm attitude of the civil and military authorities, the ready response to the appeal for Special Constables, the timely downpour, the timidity of the half-crazy Feargus O'Connor, and the instinctive shrinking of an English crowd from pushing its views to the point of bloodshed, were the principal factors in the Government's victory. In such an emergency the habitual self-confidence of the Prime Minister was an asset of the utmost value. ' He is a gallant little fellow,' wrote Greville, ' and comes out well in times of difficulty.' Knowing no fear himself, he inspired a

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feeling of security in his colleagues and the public, and he received numberless messages of congratulation from at home and abroad. That England had weathered the storm which was toppling down thrones like ninepins confirmed him in his belief not only in the soundness of British institutions, but in the wisdom of the two peaceful revolutions in which he had played a leading part—the extension of the franchise and the abolition of the tax on bread.

At no period of his eventful career did the prestige of Lord John Russell stand higher than in the summer of 1848, when the country under his guidance emerged unscathed from the menace of anarchy. To friend and foe alike he appeared as the necessary man. ‘For recovering a rout and rallying his forces,’ wrote Clarendon to Henry Reeve, ‘he is a parliamentary Ney; and the whole machine would fall into disorder if he were absent for a month.’ The General Election of 1847 had confirmed his authority. Peel had resolved never to resume office, even if it were offered to him, and the *mot d’ordre* of the Peelites was to defend the citadel of Free Trade. The Protectionists were in a minority, and the cleverest of their leaders was beginning to discover that Protection was not only dead, but damned. The repeal of the Navigation Act brought none of the disasters to the mercantile marine foretold by Lord Derby. The Queen and the Prince Consort reposed the fullest confidence in the Prime Minister, though he never inspired the warm affection they felt for Aberdeen. The Ministry was harmonious. The rising of Smith O’Brien had been crushed without delay. The second Sikh war had ended with the victory of Gujerat, and India was in the strong hands of Lord Dalhousie, whom the Whig Premier, despite party differences, had chosen for an arduous post.

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His relations with Wellington, the Commander-in-chief, were exceptionally cordial. Finally, despite the delicate health of his wife, his domestic life was as happy as his public career was successful ; and the Queen's gift of Pembroke Lodge in 1847 enabled him to escape from Westminster to the restful beauty of Richmond Park.

It was fortunate that the dark clouds within the Empire had dispersed ; for the political earthquake of 1848 released volcanic fires which continued to flame long after the close of the Year of Revolution, and which demanded the anxious attention of the Cabinet throughout its later years. The European crisis was the child of the twin forces of nationality and democracy, which had been kept under lock and key by Metternich, but had gathered strength from the teaching of Mazzini and Kossuth. In the struggle between the old and the new world, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary were fully agreed that Great Britain should throw her weight on the side of national and constitutional liberty. At home Palmerston was the enemy of a wider franchise and Lord John its champion ; but the two men regarded the corrupt autocracies of the Continent with equal disgust and the efforts of Continental reformers with equal sympathy. At times the Prime Minister was alarmed by an incautious utterance or incensed by a provocative dispatch, and the expulsion of Sir Henry Bulwer from Madrid illustrated the exasperation which the *enfant terrible* of European politics aroused ; but Lord John never omitted to express approval of his aims. The bright hopes of 1848 were quickly dimmed ; yet the reaction would have been even more triumphant had not the great twin brethren been in control of British policy. To many a rebel and patriot, languishing in prison or exile, the bitterness of defeat was in some

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measure assuaged by the disinterested sympathy of Liberal England.

The overthrow of Louis Philippe aroused no regrets in England, for memories of the Spanish marriages were still fresh, and it was generally felt that he had got no more than he deserved. Yet the fall of the Monarchy aroused apprehensions as to the policy of the Republic which succeeded it, and the incautious declarations of Lamartine increased the alarm. The attitude of Downing Street could only be one of watchful waiting, and it was not long before the star of Louis Napoleon rose above the horizon. His real character and aims were still subjects of speculation ; but it was hoped that the man who had found refuge and welcome in England would never become an enemy or a menace. Though Palmerston had been a member of the Ministry which had overthrown the mighty Emperor, and Lord John had paid him a visit at Elba, neither statesman looked with apprehension at the rise of his nephew, who for the first two years of his Presidency played his cards with skill and caution, awaiting the opportunity which his belief in his star convinced him was bound to come.

During his first tenure of the Foreign Office Palmerston had rendered effective service to national or constitutional liberty in Belgium, Spain, and Portugal. In his second term it was above all Italy which claimed and received his aid. The accession of Pius IX in 1846 supplied Italian nationalists with an unexpected but all the more welcome rallying-point, and the reforms which he courageously introduced into the administration of the Papal States were hailed with enthusiasm in Liberal circles in England. In the autumn of 1847 Lord Minto, who was not only an influential member of the Cabinet, but the father-in-law of the Prime Minister, was dis-

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patched to Rome for consultation and encouragement, despite the Prince Consort's objection that it was 'a most hostile step towards our old and natural ally.' Soon after his arrival, however, he found larger problems confronting him, for the Year of Revolution kindled the fires of revolt from the Alps to Palermo. It was a struggle between Austria and her satellites on the one side and Italian nationalism on the other. For a moment it seemed as if all the rulers of Italy would follow the Pope's lead, and combine to secure victory for the cause of constitutional liberty and the expulsion of the Austrians. Palmerston desired Austria to retain her position in the European system as a Great Power; but he considered her a cuckoo in the Italian nest, and declared in a striking phrase that her Italian possessions were the heel of Achilles, not the shield of Ajax. There was no intention in Downing Street of joining in the struggle; but the Foreign Secretary made no secret of his desire for the triumph of Charles Albert when he plunged into the fray in 1848 and again in 1849. No one without Italian blood in his veins felt keener regret when Radetzky won his victories on the Lombard plain, when the fugitive Pope shed his liberalism like an old garment, when his rule was restored by French bayonets, when Bomba once more riveted his chains on Naples and Sicily, and when Manin hauled down the flag of the short-lived Venetian Republic.

Throughout these months of storm and stress Palmerston was the voice of England and in some measure 'the umpire of Europe'; but he was only able to speak with authority because his generous aspirations were shared by his chief. While the Queen, rooted in dynastic tradition, was continually tugging at the reins, the Prime Minister's unflinching support was afforded

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to the policy of disinterested humanitarianism which had been taught alike by Fox, the model of Russell, and Canning, the mentor of Palmerston. Ten years later, when Italian nationalism fought the second round, the two statesmen had exchanged their posts, and Palmerston supported the wise audacity of his Foreign Secretary with no less zeal. The debt of united Italy to them both is incalculable, and it is equally impossible and unnecessary to decide who played the foremost part in the building of a friendly nation.

The unavailing efforts of the Russell Ministry to win liberty for the Italian people inevitably provoked the anger of Austria ; and the tension between London and Vienna was increased by Palmerston's intervention on behalf of the Hungarian refugees, when the joint forces of Nicholas and Francis Joseph had drowned Magyar nationalism in blood. The Foreign Minister was no lover of Austrian policy abroad or at home, but he differentiated sharply between the problems of Hungary and Lombardy. The survival of Austria as a Great Power was in his opinion essential to the equilibrium of Europe, and the loss of Hungary would endanger her position. For this reason he had never favoured the movement for independence, and though admiring the courage of the Magyar leaders he did not regret their defeat. It was, however, a very different matter when the victorious despots demanded the surrender of their prey by the Sultan of Turkey, in whose dominions they had taken refuge. To the delight of the vast majority of his countrymen, and with the full approval of his chief, Palmerston encouraged the Sultan to refuse the demand, and sent a British fleet to afford moral support. ' It was like holding a bottle of salts to the nose of a lady who had been frightened,' he explained to the Russian

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Ambassador. The risk of war, though slight, was not wholly negligible ; but it was willingly taken by a Government and a people to whom Kossuth was a knight of liberty and the Emperors grim janitors of the Dominion of Darkness.

The Minto Mission of 1847-8 indicated the possibility of closer official relations with the Vatican than had prevailed for generations ; but it was quickly discovered that in the mind of the British people the traditional suspicion of Rome had lost nothing of its strength. Napoleon's Concordat had inaugurated a revival of the influence of the Roman Church in Europe after the devastating hurricane of the French Revolution ; and even in England, where Catholic Emancipation was carried by a Tory Government, a remarkable increase in the number of its adherents occurred. The return of Wiseman in 1836 gave English Catholics a leader of rare capacity at the very moment that the Oxford Movement was engineering a flank attack on the latitudinarianism and Erastianism which had characterised the Established Church since 1688. To Catholic minds it seemed natural that the growth of the community in England should be followed by the creation of ecclesiastical machinery better adapted to its needs than the system of Vicars-Apostolic inherited from the seventeenth century, all the more since Catholic bishops with territorial titles already functioned in Ireland and the Colonies. The plan was reasonable enough, but the method by which it was carried into effect in 1850 was tactless and provocative. Wiseman was appointed Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster, and England was parcelled into twelve sees with territorial titles. In the Papal Brief the Pope described the Church of England as ' the Anglican schism,' and Wiseman's Pastoral Epistle, dated ' From the Flaminian

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Gate,' announced the glad tidings in language little calculated to commend them to a community still saturated with Puritanism. A wave of anger and terror swept over the country; and the people rose in their might to repel what seemed to them an audacious assault on the prerogative of the Crown and a dreadful menace to the religion of Protestants.

The outcry had already begun when the Prime Minister penned his Letter to the Bishop of Durham, which ranks with the Edinburgh Letter of 1845 in importance, but has left a very different mark upon his fame. After referring with honourable pride to his record as a champion not only of religious toleration, but of Catholic claims, he proceeded to denounce the insolence of the papal scheme and his determination to defend the Protestant character and institutions of England. It was not, however, against the open enemy that he directed his heaviest thunderbolts, but against the Puseyites and the Tractarians. The soil was still quivering with the repercussions of the Oxford Movement, and Newman's secession was only five years old. Other clergy had followed or were about to follow his lead, and Lord John closed his letter with a passionate denunciation of the 'unworthy sons of the Church of England' who were endeavouring to restore the mummeries of superstition, to confine the intellect, and to enslave the soul. It was the shrill cry of an Erastian and latitudinarian, to whom the ultramontane and the Anglo-Catholic alike were a rank offence. He had not consulted his colleagues, some of whom were dismayed to read the letter in the papers; and Clarendon complained that the harm it had done in Ireland was 'not to be told.' Gladstone pronounced it 'disgraceful,' and Sir James Graham, in more measured language, declared it to be

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‘hasty, intemperate, and ill-advised.’ Among leading statesmen Stanley alone expressed public approval, and the Queen sharply condemned the panic.

For the moment the Prime Minister was the most popular man in England, for the country had lashed itself into a frenzy. He had aroused the wrath of the bishops in 1847 by his appointment of the Broad Church Oxford Professor Hampden to the see of Hereford ; but the offence was now purged and he was hailed as a new Defender of the Faith. When, however, Cardinal Wiseman told his side of the story on his return to England, the cooler heads began to realise that the alarm was exaggerated, and that the walls of Protestantism were in no danger of falling at the first blast of the Vatican trumpet. At the opening of the session of 1851 the Prime Minister introduced an Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, including Ireland, but not the Colonies, which was read a first time by an overwhelming majority ; but the tidal wave ebbed rapidly both in the House and in the country. Bright described Lord John’s speech as ‘very good if it had been delivered three hundred years ago,’ while the Peelites, whose authority was out of all proportion to their numbers, pointed out that no law had been broken, and argued that a declaration condemning the Pope’s action would suffice. So strongly, indeed, were they opposed to the policy of the Government that when Lord John, defeated on a private member’s Bill to lower the county franchise, desired to resign or to strengthen his Cabinet by an infusion of Peelite blood, they replied that they could neither support anti-Catholic legislation in any shape, nor form an Administration at a time when, as they frankly admitted, the majority of their countrymen demanded vigorous action. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill which reached the statute-book in July was

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a far milder measure than that which had been introduced in February ; for the zeal of its parent had cooled with the temperature of public opinion, and *Punch* represented him as a little boy writing ' No Popery ' on a wall and then running away. Lord John's conduct was due not to religious intolerance, from which he was absolutely free, but to a deep-rooted conviction that Protestantism was an essential part of the hardly won liberties of Englishmen. Twenty years later the Act was repealed by Gladstone, without opposition from its author or anyone else. The Prime Minister's mistake was in acting without consulting his colleagues and in employing language of needless violence. With a single exception, his attitude towards ' papal aggression ' forms the least praiseworthy chapter in a long and honourable career. Though he never repented, he lived to admit that his phraseology had been unduly severe.

The later years of long-lived Ministries are almost always marked by decreasing homogeneity and waning public confidence, and the Whig Government of 1846 proved no exception to the rule. Lord John and Palmerston confronted the storms of the Year of Revolution shoulder to shoulder ; but the Queen complained with increasing frequency and irritability not only of the policy and temper of the Foreign Minister, but of his growing habit of acting on his own responsibility. Palmerston never interfered in domestic politics, and he expected to be allowed a free hand in his chosen field. The Prime Minister, though annoyed by the friction between Windsor and Downing Street, was in an excellent position to mediate ; for while he agreed on all leading issues with the policy of his colleague, he sympathised with the demand of the Queen, who often felt ' quite ill with anxiety,' that no step of importance

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should be taken without her consent. His personal relations with the antagonists were of the friendliest character ; and his voluminous correspondence with Palmerston shows that the Foreign Minister was generally ready to accept with a good grace the modifications of his dispatches proposed by a considerate chief.

The relative harmony which had prevailed for the first four years of the Whig Ministry was rudely disturbed in 1850, when Palmerston's high-handed methods of supporting the claims of Don Pacifico, a Portuguese Jew born in Malta, against the Greek Government aroused his resentment and led him to share the desire of the Sovereign for a change at the Foreign Office. Don Pacifico's losses arising out of a raid on his house in Athens were entitled to reasonable compensation, and the procrastination of Greece invited plain speaking and if necessary vigorous action. When, however, Palmerston insisted on blockading the Greek coast and seizing Greek shipping, it was widely felt that the punishment was disproportionate to the offence ; and when France and Russia, the other ' Protecting Powers,' withdrew their Ministers in protest, loud complaint arose that the Foreign Secretary, who, in Brunnow's phrase, possessed the hide of a rhinoceros, was once again jeopardising the peace of the world by his provocations and tarnishing the name of England by trampling on a little Balkan State. A vote of censure was carried in the House of Lords, and notice of a similar challenge was given by the Opposition in the House of Commons.

By a curious paradox the attack which was designed to overthrow ' Lord Firebrand ' maintained him in office ; for the Ministry was responsible for acts committed in its name, and the Premier was bound to defend a colleague whose actions he had allowed if not always approved.

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The thrust was parried by a resolution of Roebuck which skilfully enlarged the issue from the coercion of Greece to the whole record of the Government, and commanded support even from members who had not approved every move in the game. Lord John's measured defence of the diplomacy of his Government, described by Palmerston as 'admirable and first-rate,' conveyed no hint of his growing dissatisfaction with the most brilliant of his lieutenants; and Palmerston's four-hour speech, with the ringing peroration, 'Civis Romanus sum,' swept the House off its feet, entrenched him more firmly than ever in the admiring affection of his countrymen, and prompted Peel to the generous tribute, 'We are all proud of him.' There was much in the grave indictment of Peel and Gladstone with which the Prime Minister in his heart agreed; but the intention which he had formed and communicated to Palmerston of changing his Foreign Secretary at the end of the session was buried in the division lobby, and the Queen had to content herself with the celebrated memorandum of August 12, requiring Palmerston to explain to her his intentions in every case and, after receiving her approval, to make no alterations.

Throughout 1850 and 1851 the eyes of Europe turned with increasing anxiety towards Paris, where the Prince President was consolidating his position and biding his time. His policy was to give the second Republic rope to hang itself, and then to emerge as the saviour of society and the accepted master of France. The British Ambassador, Lord Normanby, reported in his official and unofficial letters the successive stages of his stealthy advance, and foretold everything but the day and hour of the tiger's spring. When the long-expected blow fell on December 2, 1851, the Queen and the Prime Minister agreed in their resolve to maintain strict neutrality, and

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orders were sent to Normanby to this effect. When, however, the Ambassador entered the cabinet of the French Foreign Minister, he was informed that his chief had already expressed his satisfaction to the French Ambassador. Despite their long experience of Palmerston's vagaries, the Queen and Lord John could scarcely believe that in a matter of such importance he could have scouted their admonitions and broken his promises of amendment; and it was in vain that the Minister sought to palliate his offence by arguing that his conversation with Walewski was unofficial. The cup was now nearly full, and it was soon to overflow. On December 16, despite the decision of the Cabinet to maintain an attitude of reserve towards the new French Government, Palmerston sent off a dispatch to Paris reiterating his approval of the change. Without consulting the Queen or any of his colleagues, Lord John now dismissed the most popular man in England from his post. 'I have had for five years a most harassing warfare,' he confided to Clarendon, 'not in the Cabinet, but as umpire between Windsor and Broadlands. My patience was drained to the last drop.'

The most painful decision of Lord John's life produced far-reaching results both on the fortunes of his party and on the whole of his later career. When writing his *Recollections*, twenty years later, he expressed the opinion that his conduct was hasty and precipitate, and that an interview would have led Palmerston to observe the rules of the game. This judgment was inspired by the softening influence of time and by subsequent experience of harmonious co-operation; and it compels the historian neither to censure his action nor to share his belief that the culprit would have amended his ways. If ever the head of a Government had a constitutional

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right to dismiss a colleague, Lord John possessed it in 1851. Except for the Court, Cobden, and Bright, who were frankly delighted, the dismissal of Palmerston was generally regretted by his colleagues and the country ; but while apprehensions were freely expressed as to the influence of the act on the unity and prestige of the Whig army, no one except the victim and his devoted wife argued that the Prime Minister had exceeded his powers. 'The success of Napoleon,' commented Disraeli, 'seems to have given Johnny a taste for *coups d'état*.' The gibe was undeserved ; for few Prime Ministers have exhibited such long-suffering patience towards a wayward colleague.

Lord John was well aware that his action might involve the speedy downfall of his Ministry, which after five and a half years was feeling the burdens of age. Once again the Peelites were invited to enter the Ministry, and once again they declined. At the opening of the session of 1852 the Prime Minister revealed the damaging fact that Palmerston had incurred the reiterated displeasure and admonitions of the Queen. Palmerston rejoined that he had given no cause of complaint, and hinted that his chief had also expressed approval to Walewski of the *coup d'état*—a charge which Lord John denied. The Prime Minister was generally thought to have had the best of the argument, and Disraeli observed 'There was a Palmerston.' There was no factiousness, however, in the conduct of the ex-Minister in opposing the Bill for the reorganisation of the Militia introduced by the Government and in demanding a more comprehensive scheme ; for he had paid closer attention to the problem of national defence than any civilian of his time, and the safety and greatness of the country were the passion of his life. 'I had my tit-for-tat with John Russell,' he wrote to his brother, 'and turned him out

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on Tuesday last.' Honours were now even, and the *riposte* helped to heal the wound instead of envenoming it. 'It's all fair,' observed the fallen Premier calmly; 'I dealt him a blow, and he has given me one in return.' Three weeks later Lord and Lady John, to the delight of their political friends, attended one of Lady Palmerston's parties. Throughout his Ministry he had retained the confidence and increased the admiration of his colleagues. 'He may have faults, and certainly has committed errors,' wrote Clarendon; 'but who is perfect, and who in the course of five years will not have something to repent of? He has, however, great talents and great virtues, and he is, by common consent, the only man fit to lead the House of Commons.'

The fall of the Whigs brought Lord Derby into office without a majority, and afforded the two Whig statesmen a breathing-space in which to consider their relations to each other and to make plans for the time, which could not be long deferred, when they would be recalled to power. There was, however, a new element in the situation; for whereas Lord John had hitherto been the acknowledged leader of a united party, Palmerston vowed that he would never again serve under his banner. His future was indeed one of the main topics of political speculation throughout 1852; and while some observers suggested that he would re-enter the Tory fold, others began to wonder whether he might not perhaps in the fullness of time oust his rival and cleave his way to the highest office in the State. Meanwhile Lord John, whom Clarendon described as 'dying for a fight and for office,' told his friends that Derby and his Government of untried amateurs could not be allowed to go on, since no worse Ministry could possibly be formed.

The General Election held in the summer of 1852,

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while slightly increasing the number of Lord Derby's supporters, failed to provide him with a majority. At the close of the year Disraeli's budget was demolished by Gladstone, and the Ministry resigned. For some months Lord John and Aberdeen had been in touch, and it was clear that the next Government must be a coalition. The Whigs, like the Tories, lacked a majority, and the balance was held by the Peelites, who, though relatively few in numbers, contained an exceptionally high proportion of distinguished and experienced men. Throughout Lord John's first Administration they had been content to render independent support to the guardians of Free Trade, and had declined a share in official responsibility ; but their breach with Derby and Disraeli was now complete, and the time had come for them to resume their full political activities. Since Peel's death in 1850 Aberdeen had led the party, with Sir James Graham as his principal lieutenant. The veteran peer, like his master, had grown more liberal with advancing years, and Graham had been an active member of the Whig Cabinet of 1830. Both were jealous guardians of the Free Trade settlement, and both were prepared for a further instalment of Parliamentary Reform. Moreover, the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was a dead letter. There was thus no longer any obstacle to political co-operation, and it only remained to determine who should be commander-in-chief of the united forces. A meeting at Woburn between Lord John, Aberdeen, and Lansdowne, shortly before the fall of the Derby Ministry, seemed to indicate Aberdeen as the coming man.

A Coalition Ministry without Palmerston was unthinkable, and Palmerston was unwilling to serve under Lord John. The Queen therefore sent for Lord Aberdeen, the leader of the Peelites, and Lord Lans-

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downe, the Nestor of the Whigs. The latter, who was laid up with gout at Bowood, was unable to obey the royal summons, and Aberdeen accepted the commission to form a Ministry. As chief of the smaller wing of the Coalition he at once sought the co-operation of the Whig leader, who had already expressed his willingness to serve under his old opponent ; but there was a certain flavour of bitterness in stepping down from the first place, which he had filled with acknowledged distinction for nearly six years, and accepting office under a statesman who could only boast of fifty supporters, and whose ability he rated inferior to his own. Palmerston needed pressure to accept the Home Office, but gave no trouble afterwards. 'The great obstruction,' writes the Duke of Argyll, 'was undoubtedly Lord John Russell. One day he was magnanimous and happy, the next he was jealous and jibbing badly.' Aberdeen's character was a national possession, and in length of experience he was unrivalled ; but he was seventy years old, and he was justly believed to lack the driving power needed for the highest office of the State. Though each entertained a genuine respect for the other, Lord John made no secret of his feeling that he was being called upon to make a painful sacrifice for the public welfare. 'Lord John has done all in his power,' he wrote to the Queen on February 13, 1853, 'to contribute to the formation of a Ministry in which he himself holds a subordinate situation, from which nearly all his dearest friends are excluded, and which is held by some to extinguish the party which for eighteen years he has led.' His estimate of the sacrifice was generally shared by his political friends ; and Clarendon, in rebuking Reeve for the attacks in the *Times*, testified that Lord John had laid aside all dignity and personal claims in order to facilitate the fusion that

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the country desired. The situation, however, was eased by an informal understanding that when the team had learned to pull together the Prime Minister would withdraw in favour of the Whig leader.

The partnership opened inauspiciously, for the equal division of the spoils between the Peelite minority and the Whig majority provoked outspoken dissatisfaction among the latter. 'The cake is too small,' commented Disraeli with sarcastic satisfaction. The leadership of the House of Commons fell to Lord John by natural right; but he found some difficulty in deciding which, if any, of the offices of State he should accept, and his changing mood gave the Premier a foretaste of the friction which was to distract and ultimately to destroy the Cabinet. It was finally decided that he should hold the seals of the Foreign Office till the opening of the session of 1853, when he would hand over the reins to Clarendon, and would need all his strength for the task of leading the House. During his two months of office he was not called upon to deal with any critical problem; but a choice was made in the diplomatic representation of Great Britain which was to produce results of unexpected gravity. Storm-clouds were rolling up in the Near East, and the Foreign Secretary invited Stratford Canning to return to his post at the Turkish capital, which he had lately resigned, and where he had won his spurs over forty years before at the height of the struggle against Napoleon. It was a disastrous selection; but it is only fair to reflect that a similar choice would probably have been made by any other statesman of the time.

Thanks in large measure to the unselfishness and tact of the Prime Minister, the harmony of the Ministry of all the Talents during the session of 1853 was undisturbed. In the House of Commons the honours were

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divided between Gladstone, whose first budget, introduced in a speech of incomparable eloquence, stamped him as the greatest financier of the age, and Lord John, who conducted public business with his customary skill. If differences of opinion ever arose in the Cabinet, they were differences between individuals, not between the two wings of the Coalition. The correspondence of the Premier and the Leader of the House shows their relations to have been friendly, if not exactly cordial. Beneath the placid surface of the Cabinet, however, there were factors, new and old, making for disruption. The distribution of patronage was an ever-present source of controversy and complaint. The framing of the Reform Bill, which Lord John had demanded as a condition of his support, involved a collision with Palmerston, who pushed his protest to the point of resignation. Above all, the cloud in the Near East, which at the formation of the Coalition had been no larger than a man's hand, had by the summer of 1853 darkened the heavens, and rendered it impossible for the Prime Minister to fulfil his intention of 'slipping out of office.' At the end of the session Lord John, who had already twice tendered his resignation, informed his chief that he must become the head of the Government or resign. The modest Aberdeen was the last man to evade the fulfilment of an honourable understanding; but on sounding his colleagues he discovered that his withdrawal would break up the Cabinet. The frustration of his hopes increased the restiveness of Lord John, which in turn led some of his colleagues to unfriendly comments on his ambition.

The dispute between Orthodox and Catholic monks on the custody of the Holy Places, which came to a head in the spring of 1853, was quickly settled; but the Tsar's pointed interest in 'the sick man' and his claim

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to a Protectorate over Orthodox subjects of Turkey raised far larger issues. The demands of the Menschikoff Mission were represented by the one party as a mere reassertion of traditional rights, and by the other as an audacious infringement of the sovereignty of the Sultan. Lord Stratford, who had acted as peacemaker in the problem of the Holy Places, counselled resistance to a claim which he and the Porte alike argued would transform the Sultan into a vassal prince and upset the balance of power in Europe. The withdrawal of Menschikoff from Constantinople, after the failure of his ultimatum and the breaking off of diplomatic relations, was followed by the occupation of the Danubian Principalities by Russian troops. Lord John believed that the Tsar intended to pick a quarrel with Turkey, and, like Palmerston, he watched his policy with the utmost suspicion. The seals of the Foreign Office were in the hands of Clarendon, himself a trained diplomatist ; but every step and almost every dispatch were discussed with the Leader of the House, who wrote to his colleague several times a week.

Russia was responsible for launching the crisis ; but the Tsar protested that he had no desire for war, and when the Four Powers drew up the Vienna Note in August, 1853, he accepted it on the spot. The Powers should have insisted on the Sultan following suit, but in an evil moment England and France permitted the Porte to propose certain modifications and supported them at St. Petersburg. The Tsar naturally declined to permit alterations in the scheme drawn up by the Powers and accepted by himself, and it was mainly owing to the veto of Lord John that the Cabinet neglected its plain duty of compelling the Sultan to accept the original Note. By this time the forces making for war were rapidly submerging

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the influences tending to peace. Stratford Canning, even while carrying out the orders of his Government, never concealed his personal desire that the Sultan should be aided to maintain his sovereignty unimpaired. Turkey, confident in her expectation of support, looked forward to a conflict without alarm. Napoleon III, for dynastic reasons of his own, was beginning to turn his thoughts to war, and awaited the opportunity to pay off old scores against the haughty autocrat who had refused him the coveted salutation of *Mon Frère*. The British Press had begun to inflame popular sentiment against Russia by the arts and crafts which have become sadly familiar to succeeding generations both in the Old and the New World. Finally, the Concert of the Four Powers which had produced the Vienna Note had not survived its failure, and the Tsar felt assured that neither Austria nor Prussia would be ranged among his enemies.

The rejection by Russia of Turkey's amendments to the Vienna Note was followed by warnings and exhortations to the Sultan which were watered down by Palmerston and Lord John till they lost all effect, and in October the Porte launched an ultimatum to Russia to evacuate the Principalities. A few days later Turkish troops crossed the Danube and attacked the Russian lines. When hostilities had commenced, the fear of the Russian colossus grew into a panic, and French and British ships were sent through the Dardanelles to guard the capital against a *coup de main*. A Russian naval victory, the so-called 'massacre of Sinope,' raised popular excitement to fever point, converted the *Times*, and rendered the task of the peacemakers almost hopeless. Throughout the autumn, moreover, the Cabinet had been paralysed by internal dissensions. Not one of its members desired war, but there was a genuine difference

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of opinion as to the best method of averting it. Aberdeen, who had witnessed the battle of Leipzig, was perhaps the most peace-loving Premier that England has ever known, and the possibility of fighting on behalf of Turkey, of whose incorrigible barbarism he was deeply convinced, filled him with horror. Had he been the undisputed master in his own house, he would have bidden the Turks at the outset to follow his advice or forfeit his support. Palmerston, on the other hand, who alone regarded Turkey as a civilised Power and dreaded the domination of Europe by Russia, had urged the Government to declare that it would intervene if the Sultan were pressed too hard.

Either of these policies, if consistently applied, would in all probability have averted a Russo-Turkish war; but the divisions of the Cabinet were reflected in a policy of vacillation and compromise. Though less inclined by temperament to risky and forcible methods, Lord John's influence, like that of Lansdowne and Newcastle, was thrown in an ever-increasing degree on the side of Palmerston; and Cobden angrily described him as more responsible for 'the mad popularity of the war' than anybody else. He was filled with distrust of Russia, and he told Aberdeen that if we did not fight her on the Danube we should have to meet her on the Indus. Thus the country stumbled into war through lack of firm and prescient leadership. Nicholas reasoned that a Cabinet with Aberdeen at its head would never go to war, while Turkey counted on Palmerston and Stratford Canning to help her in case of need. The Prime Minister never forgave himself for allowing himself to be dragged into 'a most unwise and unnecessary war,' and history has never forgiven him.

While the issues of peace and war were hanging in

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the balance, Lord John experienced perhaps the keenest disappointment of his life. On the formation of the Ministry it was agreed that a Reform Bill should be introduced during the second session ; but the scheme drafted by himself and a committee of the Cabinet during the autumn of 1853 aroused the outspoken hostility of Palmerston and the slightly less explosive antagonism of Lansdowne. The rest of the Cabinet supported the measure, though without much enthusiasm. ' Many of us in the Cabinet,' wrote the Duke of Argyll in his Autobiography, ' thought the whole idea merely another exhibition of the restlessness with which John Russell was consumed.' Aberdeen, who had been converted to the cause and was pledged in honour to his Chief of the Staff, refused to avert Palmerston's resignation by surrender, and he was backed by the powerful influence of Sir James Graham. Though Palmerston's genuine disapproval of the scheme was expressed in letters and memoranda of portentous length, and though it was widely believed that his resignation was in reality due to dissatisfaction with the handling of the crisis in the Near East, he returned to the fold within a few days and without conditions. It was a triumph for Lord John ; but the cup was to be snatched from his lips by a doughtier foe. When he introduced his scheme at the opening of the session of 1854 war was in sight, and the demand arose, within as well as without the Cabinet, that controversial legislation should be postponed. The Prime Minister, whom Lady John gratefully described as being ' as firm as a rock,' displayed unflinching loyalty to the Leader of the House ; but the country wanted war, not the extension of the franchise, and even its fond parent realised that the Bill must be dropped. His announcement of the sacrifice led to a moving scene in the House,

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where his uncontrollable emotion evoked a touching response from all quarters. He expressed a desire to resign; but the state of Europe called for unity in the ranks, and his tender of resignation was not very obstinately pressed.

‘We are drifting towards war,’ declared Clarendon in a historic phrase on February 14, 1854. On February 27 Great Britain and France demanded the evacuation of the Principalities within two months and an answer within six days. No answer arrived, and war was declared against Russia on March 28. Till now the harmony of the Coalition had been as close as anyone had a right to expect. Henceforth the relations of the Whig leader to his chief become more and more strained, till tension ends in a breach. ‘The great want is a head of the English Cabinet,’ he wrote on May 10, 1854. ‘If a head could be found, all might be well; but I cannot imagine how we can go on any longer without any head at all.’ Both the political and military authorities had underestimated the formidable character of the conflict, and the evil effects of insufficient preparation were complicated by lack of co-ordination, mismanagement, and bad luck. The victories round Sebastopol were useless, for the Allies were unable even to invest the fortress, and Lord Raglan proved unequal to his task.

Lord John had felt from the outset that Aberdeen was not the pilot to weather the storm, and the heart-breaking reports from the Crimea during the autumn and winter confirmed his worst forebodings. Such a conviction deserves no blame; for if he believed that he would prove the better captain, he could argue, as Mr. Lloyd George was to argue in 1916, that duty to one’s country at the crisis of its fate overrides the claims of party and personal allegiance. His apologists have

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pointed out that he never attempted to supplant his chief ; that the salutary separation of the Colonial department from the War Office was effected on his initiative ; that his advice to abolish the post of Secretary at War and to concentrate responsibility in the Secretary of State for War was thoroughly sound, and was adopted after the fall of Aberdeen ; that his suggestion for the appointment of Palmerston to the War Office was wise, and that its adoption would have steadied the nerves of the country ; that the refusal of his advice on questions of the utmost gravity placed the Leader of the House in the humiliating position of being called upon to defend decisions which he could not approve and to affect a confidence which he did not entertain ; that he attempted to resign at the end of 1854 ; and finally, on the principle that it is the last straw which breaks the camel's back, that it was impossible for him to resist the demand for an inquiry into the management of the conflict of which Roebuck gave notice at the opening of the session of 1855.

It would, on the other hand, be affectation to deny that the voice of criticism has grown louder since the publication of Spencer Walpole's narrative in 1889. The other side of the shield is presented in Lord Stanmore's biographies of his father and of Sidney Herbert, in the autobiography of the Duke of Argyll, in Lady Frances Balfour's biography of Aberdeen, in the official lives of Gladstone, Clarendon, and Newcastle, and in the Letters of Queen Victoria. The Prime Minister, runs the indictment, was the only possible head of the Coalition, and in virtue of his office he had the last word both in decisions of policy and in the selection of his colleagues. The abolition of the Secretary at War would have involved the displacement of Sidney Herbert, whose efficiency was beyond reproach,

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and the transfer of his duties to the Secretary of State for War, who was already overburdened with cares. The substitution of Palmerston for the Duke of Newcastle at the War Office, however popular the change might have been in the country, would have inflicted a stigma on a Minister whose ability and devotion were not contested by Lord John; and Palmerston was himself opposed to the change. The sufferings of the troops, which stirred the readers of William Howard Russell's reports to a passionate outburst of anger, were due not to any shortcomings of the men and machinery in Downing Street or Pall Mall, but to incompetence at the front, to the rigours of an exceptional winter, and to the crowning misfortune of the storm of November 14, which destroyed enormous quantities of warm clothing, blankets, food, and hay. And finally, when, in the words of Lord Panmure, the successor of the Duke of Newcastle, the barometer was steadily on the rise, the Leader of the House, after taking his full share in the Cabinet discussions of the business of the coming session, deserted his friends at the first blast of the trumpet. A parliamentary attack was inevitable, and he should have discussed with his colleagues how it should be met. The key to his conduct, concludes the indictment, is to be found in his restless ambition to resume his position at the head of affairs.

A twentieth-century historian, unconnected by family ties with either of the protagonists, is far enough removed from the anxieties and passions of the Crimean War to hold the scales even between rival advocates. The recording angel has little cause to reproach Aberdeen for his conduct after the outbreak of hostilities, and there is no certainty that the changes in machinery and *personnel* advocated by Lord John, however sound on their merits,

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would have produced any notable improvement in the conduct of the war. The Prime Minister had as much right to reject the proposals as had the Leader of the House to suggest them. In patriotism the veteran statesmen were equal, and Aberdeen, despite his haunting doubts as to the diplomacy which led to the conflict, was as anxious as his principal colleague for a victorious issue. Yet the two men differed so widely in temperament that friction could hardly be avoided. Aberdeen possessed nothing of the robust self-confidence which accompanied Lord John throughout life and was one of the causes of his strength; and the latter, as he had shown by his dismissal of Palmerston, shrank less from painful separations than his gentle and self-effacing chief. Moreover, the head of the Government had to consider the unity of the Cabinet and the wishes of the Queen, while his colleagues could give free rein to their own opinions. Under these circumstances it is as easy to understand Lord John's feeling of angry impotence as to visualise the irritation aroused by his captiousness in his sovereign, his colleagues, and his chief. How often and on what grounds may a Minister threaten to resign? How hard should he push a proposal which he regards as of real importance? How far shall he sacrifice his peace of mind to the maintenance of the unity of the Cabinet at a critical moment? These are questions which no text-book of constitutional casuistry can answer, and to which every citizen may supply his own response.

Even if we refrain from censure of the conduct of the Whig leader during the anxious months of 1854, there can be no flinching on the sudden resignation in January, 1855, which stands out as the gravest error of his political life. 'Lord John is the one source of trouble and weakness,' wrote Arthur Gordon, son and

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secretary of the Prime Minister, in his journal on January 22. 'We cannot exist with or without him. Wayward, uncertain, querulous, it is impossible to imagine what he may or may not do next.' All doubts were set at rest on the following day by simultaneous letters to Aberdeen and the Queen, expressing his inability to resist Roebuck's motion for inquiry into the conduct of the war and tendering his resignation. His conduct in the closing weeks of 1854 had aroused the Queen's 'indignation and disgust,' and his latest decision was bluntly described as 'desertion.'

His *apologia* is enshrined in the injured letter of January 25, which he wrote on receiving her stinging rebuke. 'Lord John Russell has received with deep regret the imputations of deserting the Government. After being at the head of the Ministry for more than five years, and being then the leader of a great party, he consented to serve under Lord Aberdeen, and served for more than a year and a half without office. After sacrificing his position and his reputation for two years, he has come to the conclusion that it would not be for the benefit of the country to resist Mr. Roebuck's motion. But it is clear that the inquiry he contemplates could not be carried on without so weakening the authority of the Government that it could not usefully go on. In these circumstances Lord John Russell has pursued the course which he believes to be for the public benefit. With the most sincere respect for Lord Aberdeen, he felt he could not abandon his sincere convictions in order to maintain the Administration in office. It is the cause of much pain to him that, after sacrificing his position in order to secure Your Majesty's service from interruption, he should not have obtained Your Majesty's approbation.' The letter produced no effect on the Queen, who replied :

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‘If Lord John will consider the moment which he has chosen to leave her Government, and the abrupt way in which his unexpected intention of agreeing in a vote implying censure of the Government was announced to her, he cannot be surprised that she could not express her approbation.’ Lord John rejoined that his resignation had indeed been very abrupt, but that it was the consequence of many previous discussions in which his advice had been rejected or overruled.

It was in vain that he proffered explanations of a course which, however defensible it might appear to himself, was universally disapproved. ‘He wished to slip out by a back way,’ observed Countess Bernstorff, wife of the German Ambassador, ‘in order to come in by the front door.’ The Peelites were bitterly incensed, and determined to oppose him if he formed a Government; but his Whig colleagues, among them Palmerston, Clarendon, and Sir George Grey, were only a little less critical. The situation was accurately described by Aberdeen with his habitual moderation in a letter to the Queen. ‘There can be no doubt that Lord John Russell has injured his position by the course which he has pursued. His own friends having remained in the Cabinet is his practical condemnation.’ Lord John never pretended to infallibility. Two years later he wrote to the Duke of Bedford that he was wrong not in substance, but in form. ‘I ought to have gone to the Cabinet and explained that I could not vote against inquiry, and only have resigned if I had not carried the Cabinet with me.’ In his autobiography, published at the age of eighty-three, he publicly confessed that he ‘committed an error in resigning my office at the time and in the manner which I did it.’ Indeed he realised his mistake within a few hours of making it; for two

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days later he expressed his willingness to return if Palmerston was sent to the War Office. But Aberdeen had had enough.

On receiving the news of Lord John's resignation, the Cabinet determined to resign, and only consented to retain office at the wish of the Queen. Its doom was sealed, and Roebuck's demand for an inquiry into the conduct of the war was carried by an overwhelming majority. Lord John himself abstained, but over seventy Whigs voted for the motion. After Lord Derby's failure to form a Government, the Queen summoned Lord Lansdowne, who advised her to send for Lord John. The Whig leader, with his usual self-confidence, thought he could succeed; but the Peelites, with the exception of Sidney Herbert, flatly refused his advances, and Clarendon, whose continuance at the Foreign Office he deemed essential, declined to join a 'still-born' Government. Palmerston alone was willing to assist, on condition that he should lead the House of Commons. Lord John resigned himself to the inevitable, and the old Ministry was restored under a new head. Aberdeen withdrew into private life, and Newcastle's place at the War Office was taken by Fox Maule, now Lord Panmure. Palmerston invited Lord John's co-operation, but the invitation was declined. The magnanimous Aberdeen never indulged in the bitter language on the author of his downfall which some of his friends permitted themselves; but he traced the overthrow of his Government in part to Lord John's 'personal ambition,' and complained that it had been 'frequently tormented by his personal waywardness.' 'He treated me very scurvily,' he wrote a year later, 'but I have forgiven him.' Despite his unfortunate experience, he always maintained that Lord John was the proper leader of the Whigs, and he had

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desired that he should succeed him as head of the Government.

Lord John was not to be long out of harness, for a few days later he complied with Clarendon's request to represent Great Britain at a Conference in Vienna to explore the possibilities of peace on a basis acceptable to the Tsar. A further surprise was in store. No sooner had he crossed the Channel than he received a new and pressing invitation to enter the Cabinet. Roebuck had renewed his demand for an inquiry into the war, which Palmerston felt it would be dangerous to resist; and Graham, Gladstone, and Sidney Herbert, declining to swallow what they regarded as an affront to their late chief, had thereupon resigned. The Prime Minister turned for help to Russell, who promptly accepted the Colonial Office. His readiness to serve his country abroad and to accept a minor post in the Government without the leadership of the House went far to assuage the resentment provoked by his recent conduct.

The first year of the conflict with Russia had proved that a dictated peace was out of the question. Sebastopol was a hard nut to crack, and Todleben was a master of his craft. Lord John accordingly started for Vienna with a sincere desire to judge the proposals for compromise on their merits. '*L'envoi de John Russell à Vienne est certainement de bon augure,*' wrote his old friend Princess Lieven hopefully to Baron Meyendorff. '*C'est au moins prendre la chose très au sérieux. Il a trop de vanité et de juste orgueil pour la prendre autrement.*' He was, however, well aware of the difficulty of extracting serious concessions from an undefeated Tsar, and since neither Palmerston nor Stratford was anxious for compromise, he had no great hopes of success. Russia had already assented in principle to four points—

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the substitution of a collective guarantee for the Russian protectorate of the Principalities, free navigation of the mouths of the Danube, the cessation of Russian naval preponderance in the Black Sea, and the renunciation of a Russian protectorate over Christian subjects of the Sultan. The problem before the Conference was to agree on the application of these principles ; and the task was rendered more, not less, difficult when the satisfaction of Austria in regard to the first and second, in which she was chiefly concerned, left her without the will to exert pressure in regard to the third.

The termination of Russian naval supremacy in the Black Sea was a phrase susceptible of various interpretations. The British envoy argued that the obvious method was to limit the number of Russian ships. The Austrian Foreign Minister, on the other hand, proposed that the same goal should be reached by allowing the Allies to maintain an equal force. To this the Allies were unable to agree, and Russia rejected the plan of limitation. The deadlock seemed complete, when Buol suggested that Russia should not increase her Black Sea fleet beyond its existing standard. Though the disadvantages of the plan were obvious, Lord John urged the Cabinet to accept it on the ground that the Allies ought to continue to act with Austria. The Cabinet's reply was a telegram approving a new French proposal for neutralising the Black Sea, which Gortchakoff declined and Buol refused to support. Thereupon the British and French envoys approved a final attempt at compromise suggested by Buol. If Russia increased her existing fleet, Turkey should equal it, while Great Britain and France should each maintain a strength equal to half the Russian force. If Russia declined this proposal, she should be invited to accept the original

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Austrian plan of limiting her vessels to the existing total. In addition, Austria, France, and Great Britain were to form a Triple Alliance to defend Turkey against aggression.

Gortchakoff was convinced of Lord John's sincere desire for peace ; but in promising to recommend these proposals to his Government, the latter explained that he did not expect any success. His forecast was fulfilled. On his return home he explained the terms to the Cabinet ; but Clarendon declared that they were only suitable to defeat, and Cowley strongly dissuaded Napoleon III from their acceptance. The Emperor yielded to the combined influence of British pressure and a hint from his generals that peace without victory would estrange the army. Drouyn de Lhuys, who was thus overruled, resigned, but Lord John, who desired to follow his example, was persuaded to retain office. He has been blamed for not pressing his resignation ; but there was no compelling reason for such a step. He had only approved the Austrian compromise as a *pis aller*, and he had not committed the Cabinet to its support. His decision to remain, nevertheless, placed him in a difficult position, and his parliamentary attack on a ' simulated peace ' provoked the retort from Vienna that he had approved a compromise. Buol's revelation aroused a storm of indignation against the man who appeared to speak with two voices, who had committed the unpardonable sin of being content with less than a dictated peace, and who had retained office after the rejection of his advice. He at once resigned, and this time Palmerston, though regretting the injustice done to an innocent man, made no effort to keep him. Lord John was induced to abandon the line which he had pursued at Vienna by the argument that the French Emperor could not afford to

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make peace. Only some weeks later did he learn that the decision of Louis Napoleon had been prompted from Downing Street, and the discovery filled him with bitter resentment against Clarendon.

The unpopularity which had beset Lord John since January, and which had rapidly ebbed in the intervening months of service, returned to him in flood, and for the next four years he was a political Ishmael. He smarted under a sense of injustice, and complained to Aberdeen that Palmerston and Clarendon had rejected the chance of peace. His active mind sought relief in authorship and travel, and he occasionally intervened in important debates. He extended a discriminating support to the Ministry ; but he took part in the attack on Palmerston for the bombardment of Canton in 1857, and he led the Opposition in 1858, when the Conspiracy to Murder Bill exposed the Prime Minister, for the first and last time in his life, to the charge of truckling to a foreign potentate.

The brief interlude of the second Derby Ministry was terminated by an amendment to the Government's Reform Bill, carried by Lord John, and at the ensuing election his stock once more stood high in the market. His brother, the Duke of Bedford, had expressed the opinion in November, 1858, that renewed co-operation with Palmerston was an absolute impossibility. On the other hand, Lord John confided to Sidney Herbert that he had no complaint against Palmerston, but only against his subordinates. He was, in fact, anxious to return to office, and even before the overthrow of Derby in 1859 the rivals declared that each would be willing to serve under the other. To avoid the painful necessity of a choice, the Queen commissioned Lord Granville to form a Government. Palmerston was ready to serve, but Lord John declined on the ground that he would be the

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third, not the second, partner in the concern. On Granville's failure the Queen turned to Palmerston, who promptly invited the co-operation of his old colleague, rival, and friend. It was the wish both of the Queen and the new Prime Minister that Clarendon should return to the Foreign Office ; but Lord John declined to accept any other post, and his chief paid the price which he demanded for his support. Lady William Russell told Granville that she was glad that the two masters Gian Bellini and Palma Vecchio had agreed to paint together, and that she expected the results to be some bold designs and fine *chiaroscuro*. In the department over which he was to rule for six eventful years Lord John found full scope for his energies. Two years later he withdrew from the chamber of which he had been a member for almost half a century, and accepted an earldom.

Two moments and two achievements stand out in Russell's long and laborious career—the carrying of the Reform Bill and the unification of Italy. He had given moral support to the early stages of the Risorgimento during his Premiership, but the forces of reaction had proved themselves too strong. By a piece of extraordinary good fortune he found himself in office once more when the smiles or frowns of Downing Street might make all the difference between triumph and disaster, and he was just in time to aid Cavour and Garibaldi to reap the harvest sown on the bloodstained fields of Magenta and Solferino. While the benevolence of Napoleon III towards Italian nationalism was tempered by dynastic considerations, the sympathy of the British Government was disinterested and unreserved. The Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—its three strongest members—

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were whole-hearted champions of the national cause, and their solidarity overbore not only the apprehensions of their colleagues, but the obstinate resistance of the Queen. This clearness of aim and strength of resolve gave a swiftness and precision to Russell's Italian diplomacy which secures him an honourable place in the line of British Foreign Ministers. It was fortunate for Italy that he had insisted on the Foreign Office, thereby excluding from the Cabinet Clarendon, whose hostility to the cause of Italian unity under the House of Savoy was notorious. 'Gladstone, Johnny, and Pam,' wrote Granville to Lord Canning in India, 'are a formidable phalanx when they are united in opposition to the whole Cabinet in foreign matters'; and behind them stood Sir James Hudson, the British Minister at Turin. The reiterated attempts of the Queen to clip his wings led Russell to exclaim impatiently that they might as well live under a despotism; but the occasional pruning of a dispatch could be borne so long as the main lines of policy were unswervingly pursued.

The foundation of a kingdom embracing the whole of Northern Italy except Venetia encouraged Garibaldi and his Thousand in the summer of 1860 to attempt the conquest of Sicily as the first step towards the overthrow of the Neapolitan Bourbons. The fall of Palermo converted Sir James Hudson, the British Minister at Turin, and Henry Elliott, British Minister at Naples, to the ideal of the unification of Italy under the sceptre of Victor Emmanuel; and their private letters informed the Foreign Secretary that this solution would not only fulfil the aspirations of the Italian people, but render Italy independent of French aid or patronage. Lord John's conversion was as rapid as that of his advisers, and the opportunity quickly arrived to testify to the faith

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that was in him. Everyone knew that Garibaldi, after completing the conquest of Sicily, would attempt to carry his arms to the mainland ; and Louis Napoleon, who desired to maintain the Bourbon dynasty as a constitutional State under French tutelage, invited the British Government to co-operate in barring the straits. Since Victor Emmanuel had publicly declared his disapproval of Garibaldi's intentions, Palmerston and Russell were about to comply. The King's declaration, however, had only been for public consumption, and at the same moment he had sent Garibaldi an autograph letter encouraging him to persevere. This strategy had to be explained to the Foreign Secretary ; and Hudson suggested to Cavour the employment of Sir James Lacaita, a Neapolitan exile in London, as his confidential agent.

The story of that historic embassy is familiar to readers of Mr. Trevelyan's brilliant pages. Sir James, an old friend of the Russells, called at Chesham Place on July 24, and, finding Lord John closeted with the French Ambassador, sent up his card with an urgent entreaty to Lady John, who was ill in bed. When his momentous message was delivered, Lady John summoned her husband to her bedside with the words ' Come up at once.' The envoy repeated his message, and explained to the Foreign Secretary that it was in his power to make or to mar united Italy. His appeal was not in vain, and on the following day the Cabinet decided to refuse the French proposal. The French Emperor, though annoyed at the unexplained *volte-face* of Downing Street, had no wish to act alone ; and Garibaldi crossed without molestation to the mainland, entering Naples without a blow and presenting Southern Italy as a rich bouquet to Victor Emmanuel. When the Powers scowled at the new kingdom of Italy, Lord John hastened to its aid with

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his historic dispatch of October 27, 1860, which brought tears of joy to the eyes of Cavour. The Italians, declared the Foreign Secretary, were the best judges of their own interests ; and he added that Her Majesty's Government would turn their eyes to ' the gratifying prospect of a people building up the edifice of their liberties, and consolidating the work of their independence, amid the sympathies and good wishes of Europe.' There was sometimes a little too much of the schoolmaster in Russell's dispatches ; but on this occasion he spoke in the generous accents of which Fox would not have been ashamed, and which were ratified by the mind and heart of the British people.

Russell's Italian diplomacy was wise, courageous, and effective ; but in the two other main problems which confronted him he was less successful. It was difficult to foretell the course of the civil war in America, and he shared the prevailing opinion that the South would win through. It was, moreover, easier for independent moralists like Bright, Cobden, and Forster to steer their course by the stars than for a Cabinet whose sympathies were divided, and whose attention was claimed not only by the issue of slavery, but by the Lancashire cotton famine, by problems of shipping and international law, and by the capricious diplomacy of Seward. The Foreign Secretary's policy of neutrality was generally approved, and he never committed a rhetorical *faux pas* of the magnitude of Gladstone's pronouncement that Jefferson Davis had ' made a nation.' Nor did he ever treat Charles Francis Adams, the Minister of the United States, with the rudeness shown by Palmerston in reference to General Butler's notorious proclamation at New Orleans.

Yet history cannot forget that the dispatch on the

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seizure of the *Trent* required modification at the hands of the dying Prince Consort, who inserted a sentence assuming that Captain Wilkes had acted without instructions. Nor could British taxpayers fail to remember that the *Alabama* had escaped while he was at the Foreign Office, and in despite of explicit warnings from the American Minister. In the latter case he afterwards frankly admitted to Adams that the incident was 'a scandal, and in some degree a reproach' to the laws of England; and later still, in his 'Recollections,' he confessed to a personal share in the costly error. 'I thought it my duty to wait for the report of the Law Officers of the Crown; but I ought to have been satisfied with the opinion of Sir Robert Collier, and to have given orders to detain the *Alabama* at Birkenhead.' On a still greater question he agreed with his chief that in the autumn of 1862 the time had come, or was about to come, for recognition of the South, which Louis Napoleon, occupied with his Mexican ambitions, had long desired. In their Italian policy the two veteran statesmen had had their way; but in the case of America the Cabinet asserted itself and, fortunately, prevented the execution of the plan. At this critical moment the friends of the North had their hands strengthened by the Emancipation Proclamation; and the claim of Jefferson Davis, 'We are fighting for independence, not for slavery,' lost its plausibility. The substitution of a moral for a political issue and the gradual shifting of fortune from the Southern to the Northern armies ensured the continuance of British neutrality throughout the remainder of the long and weary struggle.

If full marks cannot be given to Russell for his American diplomacy, neither does his handling of the Schleswig-Holstein controversy increase our admiration

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for his skill. Of his sincere desire to maintain the integrity of the Danish kingdom, as defined by the treaty of 1852, to defend the rights of the Duchies, to do justice to the sentiment of German nationalism, and to maintain the peace of Europe, there can be no doubt; but the short-sighted obstinacy of the Danish Government on the one hand, and Bismarck's resolute will on the other, presented obstacles which no British statesman could have overcome. Palmerston's ill-advised threat in 1863 that, if Denmark were attacked, she would not stand alone, was not authorised by the Cabinet; yet his colleagues approved an offer to join with France in announcing our determination to fight if Prussia and Austria supported the candidature of the Duke of Augustenburg by arms. Louis Napoleon, who was in no hurry to try conclusions with Prussia, and was annoyed by Russell's refusal to attend a European Congress, fortunately declined to co-operate; but when the Bund invaded Schleswig and Jutland in 1864 Russell and Palmerston favoured armed, even if single-handed, support of Denmark. The rest of the Cabinet, strongly reinforced by the Queen, saved the country from an unsupported adventure to which public opinion was opposed, for which its military resources were inadequate, and which would almost certainly have given the signal for Louis Napoleon to march to the Rhine. The London Conference in June, 1864, failed to influence the combatants; for Denmark remained intransigent, and Bismarck was convinced that England would not fight. The renown of Great Britain suffered grave damage from the repeated rejection of her counsels and light-hearted indifference to her threats. A no less significant *diminutio capitis* occurred when Russell's admonition to the Tsar, based on the Treaty of Vienna, to restore the liberties of Poland was

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met by Gortchakoff's advice to mind his own business. Lord Robert Cecil thundered in the *Quarterly Review* against 'Lord Russell's fierce notes and pacific measures.' It was a policy, in Lord Derby's words, of 'meddle and muddle,' and the prestige of Great Britain, which had been notably enhanced by the triumph in Italy, was temporarily clouded by the discovery that her bark was worse than her bite.

There is nothing more admirable in the distinguished career of 'the two old ringleaders,' as Clarendon called them, than the unbroken harmony of their co-operation between 1859 and 1865. They disagreed about Parliamentary Reform; but the fate of the measure which Lord John was allowed to introduce in 1860, and was compelled to withdraw, showed that the indifference of the Prime Minister was shared by the country. The Foreign Secretary never yielded to the temptation to make runs off his own bat, as Palmerston had done ten years before; and the Prime Minister never carried his right of supervision to a point which wounded the pride or diminished the authority of his colleague. On the three main issues of Italy, the American war, and Schleswig-Holstein, they were in close agreement with one another, though not with the majority of the Cabinet. There is no justification for the view that throughout his life Russell was a difficult colleague or an exacting chief. The only friction that had disturbed the harmony of his Premiership was due to the velleities of his Foreign Secretary, and the correspondence of the two men during Palmerston's closing years flows placidly onwards without a ripple. The harmony of the old rivals struck every observer. 'John Russell at present is entirely in Palmerston's hands,' wrote Greville to Reeve in February, 1860, 'and is content to let him direct everything.' The

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Foreign Secretary was the last man to play the part of a puppet, and the partnership was the fruit of political agreement and personal regard. Palmerston humorously complained to Delane that he had set the chimney at Broadlands on fire in burning Gladstone's letters of resignation ; but the flames were never fed by communications from Pembroke Lodge. Russell's relations with his subordinates were equally harmonious. '*Dans l'intimité,*' wrote Robert Morier, his principal adviser on German politics, 'he is more pleasant than it is possible to describe, the pleasantest chief to do business with, and the pleasantest companion to live with.' Thus the unhappy parenthesis of the later months of the Aberdeen Ministry appears in its proper perspective rather as the result of a tangled situation than as the expression of an overbearing temperament or a congenital prickliness.

The death of Palmerston in October, 1865, left Russell without a competitor for the highest post ; but his enduring renown owes nothing to the brief and troubled months of his second Premiership. He was now seventy-three, and he inherited not only the colleagues of Palmerston, but the Parliament recently returned to support him. 'It is very hard to accept Lord Russell,' wrote Dasent to Delane ; 'everyone dislikes and distrusts him.' It was quite untrue ; but he could make no claim to the popularity of his predecessor. His first step was to hand over the Foreign Office to Clarendon, the second to prepare a Reform Bill ; but the parliamentary and popular favour needed to fill the sails of the ship did not exist. 'None of the Ministers, except Russell and Gladstone,' wrote Delane, 'has the least hope or desire of carrying the Bill.' In this maladjustment of supply and demand lies the secret of the failure of his Premiership. The time and energy of the Prime Minister and of Gladstone, to whom he naturally en-

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trusted the Leadership of the House, were devoted to framing a Bill which was introduced on March 12, 1866. Though the measure was of the mildest character, the Opposition, reinforced by the formidable eloquence of Lowe, fought it to the death. It was a tactical error not to present the scheme as a whole, and only to propose redistribution at the demand of a hostile House. The Prime Minister's handling of the situation revealed diminishing vitality and a weakening grip. The conduct of the 'Adullamites' filled him with anger; yet he abandoned his offspring without a sigh on a defeat in committee. The years had begun to tell, and in June he threw up his task with relief. Yet his labours had not been in vain; for a few weeks later the railings of Hyde Park were thrown down, and the reviving popular demand gave the third Derby Ministry the opportunity of 'dishing the Whigs' and 'shooting Niagara.' If the Reform Bill of 1867 was carried by Disraeli, it was none the less the child of Russell, Gladstone, and Bright.

At the end of 1867, warned by a series of fainting fits, Russell informed his political friends of his intention to surrender the leadership of his party whenever Lord Derby resigned or retired, and of his resolve not to take office again. He rejoiced at the Liberal victory of 1868; but the veteran of seventy-six had neither the strength nor the desire to accept Gladstone's invitation to join the Cabinet. The last decade of his life requires little comment. Unlike his old leader, Lord Grey, he remained to the end a progressive Whig, and facilitated the transition from Whiggery to Liberalism. There is no trace in his books and pamphlets, his speeches and his correspondence, of the mental inertia or the moral scepticism of age. 'England is in the full enjoyment of civil and religious freedom,' he wrote in 1874; 'there is nothing so conservative as progress.' He supported the

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disestablishment of the Irish Church as zealously in 1868 as he had championed the Appropriation Act of 1834, and he was the first statesman of the front rank to applaud the revolt of the Christian subjects of the Turk. That he opposed the introduction of the Ballot is no more a proof of growing conservatism than in the case of Mill. His sharp criticism of the decision to refer the *Alabama* controversy to arbitration revealed a certain blindness to the wider considerations involved in the case ; but he lived long enough to confess in his Autobiography that he ought to have prevented the sailing of the vessel. He rejoiced to witness the completion of Italian unity, the downfall of Louis Napoleon, and the foundation of the German Empire ; and when Bismarck rashly engaged in his struggle with the Vatican, the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill cheered him to the fray. In his closing years he was regarded by all parties as a national possession, and on his death in 1878 his countrymen recalled with pride and gratitude his memorable services to the country and the world.

Little needs to be added to the touching confession made by the dying statesman to his wife : ‘ I have sometimes seemed cold to my friends, but it was not in my heart. I have made mistakes, but in all I did my object was the public good.’ Russell inherited a name which was in itself a programme, and added lustre to a family whose records are indissolubly associated with the preservation and extension of British freedom. In the length and value of his public service, in undeviating fidelity to principle, in devotion to liberty, in the sense of public duty and indomitable pluck, he is surpassed by none of the illustrious statesmen who have held the highest office under the Crown ; and his share in the making of modern England is equalled by Lord Grey alone.

CORRESPONDENCE OF LORD JOHN RUSSELL

CHAPTER I

THE EUROPEAN CRISIS OF 1840

THE closing year of the Melbourne Government was a period of acute anxiety at home and abroad.¹ Mehemet Ali, the Albanian adventurer who had established himself in Egypt, had conquered Syria in 1833, and his advance on Constantinople had only been hindered by the veto of Russia, who secured in payment for her assistance the virtual control of Turkish policy. In 1839 the struggle between the Sultan and the vaulting ambitions of his vassal broke out afresh. The Turkish troops were once again defeated in Syria, and the Turkish Admiral treacherously surrendered the fleet to the rebels. These events were watched with unconcealed satisfaction by France, who saw a chance of increasing her influence in the Eastern Mediterranean, but with dismay by England, who scented danger to her imperial position and responsibilities. 'The mistress of India,' declared Palmerston, 'cannot permit France to be the mistress, directly

¹ In this and in subsequent chapters relating to foreign affairs the reader should refer to the *Letters of Queen Victoria*; Martin, *Life of the Prince Consort*; Ashley, *Life of Palmerston*; *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, vol. ii.; Alfred Stern, *Geschichte Europas im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*. For the French view of this crisis see Guizot's *Mémoires*, vols. v. and vi.; Thureau-Dangin, *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet*, vol. iv. Cp. J. Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, chaps. vii. and viii.

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or indirectly, of the road to her Indian dominions.' While the French Government proposed to end the crisis by adding Syria to the recognised possessions of Mehemet Ali, the British Government desired the expulsion of the invader from Syria, and was ready to employ the Concert of the Powers for this purpose. In this manner France's growing control over the avenues to India would be checked, and with the installation of the Concert as protector of Turkey the privileged position of Russia at Constantinople would terminate. If France consented to keep in step, her aid would be welcomed; if she declined, the Powers would proceed without her.

The aims of Palmerston were generally approved by his colleagues; but the risks of his policy became apparent when France declined to share in the coercion of her *protégé*. Louis Philippe was a man of peace; but Thiers, who had been called to office in March, 1840, was resolved to maintain French prestige in the Nile valley, and was convinced that the eviction of Mehemet Ali from Syria was impracticable. Thus the local dispute between Cairo and Constantinople grew into a trial of strength between Paris and London. The duel was watched with tense anxiety throughout Europe, and not least by the Cabinet colleagues of the masterful Foreign Minister. Lord Holland, an outspoken friend of France, fought stoutly against what appeared to him dangerous courses, and it was whispered that his sudden death in October was in part due to the agitations of the summer. No less hostile was Lord Clarendon, who, in exchanging diplomacy for politics, continued to survey the European chess-board with an expert's eye. The Prime Minister, who, unlike Lord Grey, gave Palmerston a free hand, kept his anxieties for the most part to himself, well aware that the resignation of his Foreign Secretary would bring

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down a Ministry which had lost both its strength and its popularity.¹ Lord Lansdowne shared the uneasiness of his chief, without venturing to cross swords with his colleague. Outside the Cabinet Lord Spencer, the Duke of Wellington, and the King of the Belgians urged caution in view of the dangers of the situation.

The divisions of the Cabinet and the virtual abdication of the Prime Minister rendered the attitude of Lord John Russell of unusual, and indeed decisive, importance. 'Except Lord John Russell, whose opinion I do not know,' reported Guizot, the French Ambassador, to Thiers on June 1, 'the majority disapprove Palmerston's policy.' Lord William Russell, the British Ambassador at Berlin, exhorted his brother to stand firm, and the Leader of the House, who generally preferred boldness to timidity, rallied to the side of Palmerston. Without his support, as the Foreign Secretary gratefully confessed, it would have been impossible to conclude the treaty of July 15, by which Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia pledged themselves to defend the Sultan and to impose a settlement on Mehemet Ali. The news of the treaty aroused indignation in France, who complained that a leading European question had been settled behind her back. War was openly discussed on both sides of the Channel, and Mehemet Ali, secure in the patronage of France, refused to surrender Syria. During the following months, when peace and war hung in the balance, almost every member of the Cabinet except Palmerston himself was oppressed with anxiety. On July 28 the French Ambassador visited the Prime Minister, whom he found uneasy, and Lord John Russell, who was scarcely less apprehensive. The machinery

¹ The portrait of Melbourne in Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* is the gem of a brilliant volume.

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of coercion was nevertheless set in motion, and on September 11 the Allied fleets bombarded and took Beyrout. When, on September 14, the Sultan announced the deposition of Mehemet Ali as ruler of Egypt the anger of France rose almost to boiling-point.

In the Cabinets which followed the summer holidays Ministers renewed their battles. Lord John argued for compromise with growing insistence and threatened resignation ; but Palmerston, who confidently predicted the speedy collapse of Mehemet Ali, persuaded his colleagues to maintain the demand for the evacuation of the whole of Syria. On October 8 Thiers informed the British Government that France could not allow the deposition of Mehemet Ali from the throne of Egypt. Palmerston, who had no desire for war, accordingly advised the Sultan to recognise Mehemet Ali as hereditary ruler of Egypt, in return for the surrender of Syria, Adana, and the Holy Places, and the restoration of the Turkish fleet. A few days later Louis Philippe refused to accept the bellicose draft of a King's Speech, and replaced Thiers by Guizot, who had never believed the Syrian claims of Mehemet Ali to be worth a war. All danger both of hostilities and of a break up of the Cabinet was averted by the surrender of Acre on November 3, which was followed by the evacuation of Syria and the acceptance of the terms of the Four Powers. Palmerston was the hero of the hour, and none of his colleagues grudged him his success. It was the less spectacular achievement of Lord John, who was accused both by Palmerston and Clarendon of vacillation and inconsistency, to aid Melbourne in keeping the Ministry alive and by his efforts at mediation to avert the loss of a single colleague.

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*From Lord William Russell*¹

Paris : March, 1840.

Nothing can surpass the political effervescence that begins here. People's minds are in a high state of excitement, and if we were in the Dog-days instead of the month of March there would probably be a revolution. The turn of things will depend on the possibility of Thiers being able to constitute and put in motion his Ministry. The Secret Service vote is to be taken as a vote of confidence, and if Thiers has a majority he will go on like you, heedless of small defeats—if he is beat on this vote he will resign, and a scene of confusion will ensue that will make all Ministries impossible except one of the extreme Gauche after a dissolution. The Molé party, however, is sanguine and wishes to take the helm, but it would be swept away in a fortnight. The worst feature of all is the total discredit into which the King and all public men have fallen, and the nation is getting disgusted with their personal squabbles. In short the Orleans Dynasty has taken and probably will take no root, and the *avenir* of the country appears very uncertain. I should not think that Thiers will change the Eastern policy of France—but he is favourable to the English Alliance, more so than his predecessors, and will be more conciliatory in form and language. The French, without knowing why, have espoused the interests of Mehemet Ali, yet they will not do more than plead for him, and probably would throw him overboard if he was troublesome, and you may depend upon it that France will be no serious obstacle to carrying out the views you think advantageous to England. At the same time it is as well to be as conciliatory as you can to Louis Philippe in the midst of his difficulties, for our own interest requires that we should uphold his throne, which totters frightfully. I sat next to the Duc de Broglie at dinner ; he desired to be remembered to you. He supports the new Ministry. I met old Soult too, who seems sadly

¹ British Ambassador at Berlin and elder brother of Lord John Russell.

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crestfallen. Yesterday I dined *tête-à-tête* with the old Lieven and to-day I dine with the Apponyis. I am now going to the Chamber of Deputies to hear Thiers' programme. To-morrow I shall go to his first public *soirée*, and after seeing all the Lions and hearing them roar shall set out for Berlin.

From Lord Palmerston

F.O. : July 4, 1840.

I am on every account extremely anxious to have an early decision of the Cabinet upon the question which I submitted to them to-day. Melbourne desires me to settle a day with you. Will Wednesday suit you? I send you a note I had from Neumann which shows you what the feeling of Austria is, and what weight she attaches to the decision of the British Cabinet and to the union of the Four Powers.

P.S.—I look upon the question for decision to be, whether England is to remain a Substantive Power, or is to declare herself a dependency of France. In the event of the latter decision you had better abolish the office of Sec^y of State for Foreign Affairs and have in London an Under-Sec^y for the English Department deputed from the Foreign Office at Paris.

From Lord William Russell

Berlin : July 10, 1840.

You really have the patience of a saint. Don't lose it. Persevere as long as you can. Your enemies have quite lost the confidence of Continental Governments. Their return to power would be regarded as a serious calamity. They are compared to the French Carlists, to Polignac & Co. *Le Duc de Wellington baisse, il n'est plus maître de son parti*, is in everybody's mouth. Palmerston stands very high now with all the Continental Cabinets. His management of the Belgian question gained him great credit, and he may manage if he chooses the Eastern question. Don't show any distrust of Russia, but don't let her occupy Constantinople. The whole question is

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in this, and your foolish quarrels in Greece do us harm. Hint this to Palmerston.

From Lord William Russell

Berlin : July 15, 1840.

I am glad to hear that you are likely to weather the storm. Perhaps it may abate before next session. The East should now engage your serious attention ; you have a grand game to play if you have the daring. Chatham would do it. Open the Black Sea to all ships and all nations.

From Lord William Russell

Berlin : July 22, 1840.

The violence of war seems to have subsided. I wish you joy and a few months of repose and health. I am delighted that you have at last signed the Convention. If the four Powers had allowed France and an old tyrannical Pacha to brow-beat them, old England had better have shut up shop and ceased to be a Nation.

Memorandum by Lord John Russell

August 5, 1840.

For ans. See *Amad.*
Paris Rev.
5 M. 1840

With Lord Melbourne's concurrence, I saw this morning the Duke of Wellington, on the subject of the Military force in the Mediterranean. When I had informed him of the present force, and that it was proposed to add to it two regiments, he said he thought that force sufficient, considered merely as garrisons—that the French would be very loth to touch a British garrison—that it was a serious thing to meddle with British troops. But then, he said, you must keep on an equality, or nearly on an equality by sea, your danger is in the French having too much force. L. Philippe has let himself be carried too far by M. Thiers. He has placed everything in his hands. Then when the force is ready, the nation may say, ' Now you are the strongest, why don't you attack them ? ' Therefore, he said, you must take care to be tolerably equal in Naval force—for the French are driving at every thing—Marine as well as Military force.

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He went on to speak of the more general and political question. He said he thought we stood very well upon the whole. However, the great object is to keep the peace of the World. We are a Quintuple Alliance. It has often happened that Allied Powers have differed as to the mode of accomplishing an object, but these are matters of communication and arrangement. But, as to the form, I am told it is not true that the French have been kept in ignorance. The matter has been going on for nearly a year, and they have been informed of all the steps taken. Therefore they have no ground of complaint as to the form. But the way to embarrass them, if they wish to leave the Alliance, is to ask them for a *contre-projet*. If their proposal agrees nearly with yours, then you may understand one another. If on the other hand they refuse any *contre-projet*, it is they who break up the Alliance, not you. He gave it as his opinion that it would all blow over, the only point of danger being, as he thought, the very great force to be kept up by France. I asked him whether it were true that he had given it as his opinion to M. Brunnow that the Pacha cannot keep Syria, unless he can transport troops and stores by sea. He answered, 'He can't. He must supply his army by sea. He cannot keep up his communications by the Desert. The expense will be too great.' The points he urged most were that we should ask the French for a *projet* in writing for the pacification of the East, that we should not allow the French to be too superior by sea, and that we were bound to do all in our power to keep peace—the grand object for the World.

*From Lord Holland*¹

August, 1840.

I think the Duke's two points, Counter project from France and Equality of Naval force, are quite just and right to be attended to. With all the deference which an entire ignoramus must have for a Man of Skill, I am

¹ Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

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by no means convinced that Mehemet Ali can be forced to evacuate Syria by naval force only.

From Lord Holland

August 24, 1840.

Do not, my dear John, think me captious or reproachful if I observe that those who sanctioned the signature of the treaty of last month ought to have thought of these matters beforehand. *Qui vult antecedens non debet nolle quod consequitur.* We began all five by telling or implying a lie on the Collective Note, namely that we had settled what to do, and four of us shall end by acknowledging that we cannot do what we had settled. I hope it may only end so farcically and that the Tragedy may not come at last. Happy I am to say that Guizot's language and spirits were better after than before his visit to Windsor. He assured me that they had issued from Paris the most pacifick instructions they could to all their agents, and Minto seems to me to have done what he could (with what effect on the main object of harassing the Pacha is another question) to prevent raising the questions you so naturally and justly apprehend. You settled before you left town that on the arrival of Ratifications a paper of some sort should be drawn up for the French. Is it prepared? For God's sake, let it be as conciliatory as truth and circumstances will permit. Guizot knows of the intention, for he talked to me of it. It would be well to ascertain from him beforehand, what *tournure* of phrase would particularly please him, and if, being just and true, it were such as a little disappointed (I won't say nettled, for that would not be right) those who too successfully have laboured to put us asunder, I believe it would recall us to the paths of peace.

To Lord Holland

August 27, 1840.

My belief is that if we had not signed the treaty of July 15 France would have bullied and crowed, and her reluctance to make any offer at all to settle matters in

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the East would have left her and Russia at liberty either to divide or to fight for the spoils of Turkey ; and I cannot see how we could then have regarded the position we should have lost. Nothing but the absence of any fair proposal made one agree to the treaty.

From Lord Holland

August 28, 1840.

By what I hear and hope Minto and Palmerston have solved, and in the right way, your questions about blockade and search. Non-Belligerents can have no right to exercise either. This Palmerston acknowledged when asked in the Commons why he did not blockade the coast of Biscay, by answering, ' Because it is precisely the one thing I have no right to do, and therefore cannot and will not do.' Adherence to this principle in practice eschews many evils, but will it assist us in harassing the Pacha's operations ? What we can do under the treaty seems then very little. Yet little as it is, it seems to be far more than the other parties either intend or even wish to do. Prussia does nothing. Austria gives a sloop or two and her flag (the counterpart of L. Napoleon's Eagle), but not a man or a stiver ; and Russia, all powerful and zealous Russia (the extent and readiness of whose succours were the object of our dread), so far from panting for an opportunity of overwhelming the Porte by pretended protection, confines her promises to a niggardly offer of furnishing in certain well defined and improbable contingencies from time to time a niggardly force of 15,000 without cavalry or artillery horses, to be shipped from the Crimea to Constantinople. But though she contributes so little to the *immediate objects* of the treaty, the Emperor is frantick with delight at the alternate results he expects from it. They are, he tells Bloomfield with great naïveté, the permanent separation and estrangement between England and France, and the hopes, if not of war, at least of counter-revolution in that latter country ! I hope that in some shape the last

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measure you recommended before you left town will be speedily executed, and some scheme or assurance, in shape of note, treaty, or manifesto, given to France and the world that we did not sign the treaty with any hostile feeling towards her, and that after signing it as before we cherish the hope and stedfastly purpose to study the means of preserving a cordial intimacy with her. But in common honour and in common prudence if we say this we must say it in our own name and not in that of Powers whom you now all know, and as I all along have suspected, to be actuated not only by different feelings but by such as are precisely the reverse of those we profess and I hope entertain.

As to news from the Levant, Hodges writes that Mehemet Ali reported even with some wrath the pacifick advice, conveyed to him through Mr. Perier from France (for France has been, I believe, all along earnest in persuading him, though without threats, to be moderate and reasonable), and he (Hodges) seems to entertain no hopes of his acceding to the terms proposed to him by the four Powers. This determination, which otherwise he thinks would be madness, he ascribes to some knowledge or at least conviction in the Pacha's mind of widespread disaffection throughout the Turkish dominions. If this be so I should suspect that he will prove a better judge of popular feeling than Louis Napoleon or even Lord Ponsonby, and I shall expect his infatuation to be more responded to in Asia and even Europe than that of the one at Boulogne or the other in Syria. Napier writes that the Syrian insurrection is entirely put down, and that after the first day Mehemet's troops behaved admirably and raised his opinion of their discipline and gallantry. Napier evidently admires the resources of the Pacha's mind and Government, questions the desirability of putting him down at all, is yet more doubtful of the practicability of doing it, and quite satisfied that if there ever was an opportunity it is lost. I understand from Minto that the augmentation of our naval force, to

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which we were driven by the hot, hasty and unwarrantable but not unexpected language in France, goes on silently but more prosperously than could be expected. This is right and fortunate. But it is lamentable that it should be necessary, and devoutly to be hoped that that necessity may soon cease. The Russian way of greeting the treaty at least shows that the exaggerated resentment of the French was not quite without provocation; for if all the contracting parties had been actuated by the same motives which one of them now avows, the resentment of France would not only have been justified but called for by a treaty which had for its ultimate object a counter-revolution in that country. Lady H. has been very uncomfortable, but is better. The *Morning Chronicle* does much harm both abroad and at home.

To Lord Holland

August 31, 1840.

I think there should be two notes. The one to all the Courts of Europe, disclaiming all ambitious views in Syria or any part of the Turkish dominions. The second would be from us to France, referring to the Alliance which has subsisted for ten years between the two nations, and putting in an official form that desire for its continuance which Palmerston expressed in the House of Commons. As to what may happen in the East, time will soon show. I do not think a blockade of the Egyptian fleet and the prohibition of communication in ships of war between Egypt and Syria can be so indifferent to M. Ali as you suppose. If he finds himself desperate, he will surely attempt Constantinople, the consequences of which I cannot pretend to foresee. I am glad to observe that the French are disposed to take a juster view of their situation. If we two were to pull each other to pieces, it would indeed be *beau jeu* for Nicholas. But I believe no party in this country would go to war with France except strictly in self-defence.

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From Lord William Russell

Berlin : September 1, 1840.

The Convention of 15 July is no doubt a most serious affair, and no man can tell into what difficulties it will lead us, but a Cancer was growing rapidly and it was necessary to run the risk of cutting it out, or to succumb to its pernicious effects. This is what I mean by my figure. The French have been long at work at a vast plan, to which the English did not open their eyes till very late. The plan was and is to destroy the Porte and to make an offensive and defensive Alliance with Russia. The hatred of Nicholas for Louis Philippe prevented the Alliance from being formed and gave England time to see the danger and to check it by the Convention of July. The French, not discouraged by Nicholas's antipathy to them, had worked on in furtherance of their great scheme, and are now furious at being thwarted and losing their dupe England. I do not see how, placed as you were, you could have done otherwise than make the Treaty—it was a calamity, but a less calamity than bowing the head to the caprice and dictation of the French journalists. *Now*, we must look forwards. We *must* succeed. Failure would bring endless disaster, success will give us ten years of peace. I presume that you have taken your measures with calculation, firmness and energy, and that our fleet is equal to that of the French. I have procured and sent to Palmerston a good deal of military and topographical information which will enable him to direct his blows against Mehemet Ali. As for the Ottoman Empire it is certainly in a tottering state, but if we succeed in this affair we can prop it up for some years more. Look at the Greek Empire, how long it was before it fell when corruption of every sort had ruined the bases. Great Empires do not disappear so rapidly from the world. If this affair is well settled we shall be able to put some fresh life into Turkey. Ellice and Bowring led Thiers into error by telling him that Palmerston would be turned out by the voice of all

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England the moment he signed the Treaty. My colleague Bresson has been behaving like a madman in his fury against Palmerston.

From Lord Holland

September, 1840.

I am very glad you are in communication with Spencer. He is sure to see a matter of this sort in the true light. The French, I am afraid, have been not only talking angrily but acting horribly and even harshly in more quarters than one, *since the signature of the treaty*; but you know I thought as I now think, that such conduct was to be expected though not justified. I am satisfied they may still be harked back by being allowed *a finger* in the pie, and if denied it *now*, I am much afraid they will thrust their whole paw into it and make a sad mess. I think it easy to devise some plan, quite in unison with terms, spirit and object of the treaty, which would naturally commence with a truce—and once we get a *truce* we may hope for concluding things peaceably. Neither France, the English public, nor common regard for poor Turkey itself would ever endure Russian armies in Asia Minor.

P.S.—If Turkish possessions are guaranteed to the Porte and France is invited to join in the guaranty, the Hereditary Pashaship of Egypt should also be guaranteed to the Pasha, and this would be in form and appearance a sort of concession to France; but in importance and truth, if the designs imputed to her be true, it would be a security against one of them, viz. her intention of regaining for herself the possession of Egypt.

From Lady Holland

September, 1840.

I very much regret your change of destination, as your presence would have been useful and important. I quite fear the *worst*—that is war. Macaulay holds very absurd language at Paris, quite calculated to do great mischief. In short, he is a fool unless with a pen

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in his hand, or a studied oration in his mouth. Our affairs in the East, indeed the fate of Europe, are in the hands of a Lying Jacob, a cut-throat and Bohemian, for so may be characterised our ambassador, admiral and antagonist. They tell me Guizot is *greatly* annoyed. I feel for Melbourne and the Queen. The D. of Wellington most inconsistently approves the policy, deprecates and *dreads* the consequences. Your firmness, temper and coolness might avert great disasters. God bless you and yours.

To Lord Holland

September 7, 1840.

Affairs in the East seem to be moving to a crisis, and I trust all parties will see that the old Pacha ought not to be allowed to set the world on fire, whatever he may do in Syria or even in Mesopotamia.

To Lord Holland

September 15, 1840.

The terms of affection in which you and I have always stood to each other, and the extreme importance of the matter, entitle me to tell you that, unless my three proposals are acceded to, I shall at once resign. I think it far better that Palmerston should conduct the matter in his own way than that he and I should spoil two consistent courses, and make between us a bad and dangerous one.

Memorandum by Lord John Russell

September 18, 1840.

It will be readily admitted, I should suppose, that the menacing preparations of the French Government, and the violent language of the French press, ought not to prevent our doing what may be due in justice to France, or required by a concern for the general interests of Europe. Upon the first of these heads it is to be remarked that no offence is given to France by the treaty

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of July 15. The treaty omits France simply because France could not agree to the general principle of that treaty. But if, in the course of the operations to be carried on, whether in Syria by our forces, or in Asia Minor by those of Russia, or at Constantinople by the arms of both Powers, Turkish territory should be, for a considerable period, or on important positions, occupied by the Allies, it is according to usage and according to reason that France should have security that no partition, or separate advantage, is contemplated. Is the security of professions made by official dispatches or verbally such as France ought to be satisfied with? We may think so, but France may reasonably differ on that point, and I confess that, if England were the party omitted, I do not think we should be satisfied with such professions on the part of France and Russia.

If this be the case, it is desirable to devise some other kind of security to be offered to France. I know none better than that which was once proposed by Prince Metternich, namely a treaty of Mutual guarantee, binding all the Great Powers of Europe to seek for no separate advantage or increase of territory at the expense of Turkey. That which is due to France having been thus afforded to her, it is desirable for the general interest of Europe that no protracted struggle should take place in Syria. It is hardly possible to carry on hostilities in the Mediterranean for a long time, without France becoming a party in the contest. Supposing then that the insurrection in Syria should not speedily gain such strength as to threaten the position of Ibrahim with immediate danger, the question is how the objects of the treaty can be attained. To attack Mehemet Ali at Alexandria—to land English or Russian troops in Syria—to bring the Russians through Asia Minor to the passes of the Taurus—these seem to me all dangerous expedients. There is one measure which would appear safe and effective—it is that of landing 15, or 20,000 Austrians in Syria. But the Austrian government is

opposed to such a measure. It remains therefore for consideration whether we ought to continue the employment of means which may irritate M. Ali and increase the excitement of France without accomplishing our end. For this result we ought to be prepared, and I therefore propose :

1. That some person, who shall have been less heated by the share he has had in past events than Lord Ponsonby, should be sent to Constantinople, such a person, for instance, as Sir Charles Vaughan.

2. That while the specific articles of the Treaty should be fully executed, such orders should be given that no effusion of blood should take place on the coast of Syria, from which no useful or adequate result can be obtained.

To Lord Melbourne ¹

September 20, 1840.

Palmerston's letter is very temperate, but I cannot agree that his facts are accurate or his deductions correct. The landing of marines and artillery, with the risk of the lives of some thousand persons, is surely not a matter of detail, on which the Cabinet have no right to an opinion. Nor can I infer from the declaration of Thiers that he wishes to have 600,000 men in arms, and extend the French territory on the Continent, that this does not look like war. I suppose if orders were given to attack Napier's squadron, if it remained a month longer on the coast, Palmerston would conclude that the French were bent upon peace. What you say of the warlike disposition of the French people is very true. It is precisely for this reason that prudent men, the Duke of Wellington, Metternich, Broglie and Guizot, wish that the French Gov^t should have the means of saying to them, 'Our interests and our honour are safe—leave the world at peace.'

¹ For further correspondence between Melbourne and Lord John, see *Lord Melbourne's Papers*, ed. Lloyd Sanders, chap. xiii.

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I send you letters from Ellice and Thomson. You will see that Ellice thinks there will be no war. But these newspaper quarrels are shocking. You ought to control the press, so far as it is conducted by your own colleagues and subordinates. I wrote from Scotland to complain of the *Chronicle*. It has been rather better of late, but still far from rational. You will see by Ellice's letter that Aberdeen is breast-high with us. That does not quite convince me that we are adopting a true Whig policy.

To Lord Melbourne

September 21, 1840.

Louis Philippe has a great advantage in his conversations with foreign Ministers. In the first place, his words never can be quoted against him as they do not commit his government. Secondly, he can for the same reason slip out of them at any time, and say he is thwarted by his Ministry and the Chamber. So that I do not think he is imprudent in talking in the way he does. But we should be very imprudent if we made our actions depend at all upon his words. His real position I take to be this. He has been working for some years to get fully admitted into the Royal Academy of Sovereigns—and now having been foiled by the dislike of Nicholas to him, and his own fear of his people, he tries to make himself safe by flattering his own people, and augmenting his military force. It is a dangerous course both for Europe and for himself. Our position on the other hand is this. In 1815 we got everything we could wish, or chose to wish, in the way of external security. In 1830 we got internal security by the accession of a Sovereign liberal enough for France, and conservative enough for Europe. If we throw away all this, we shall play the game of the desperate republicans, Carlists, & Bonapartists who were losers from the last throw of the dice, and would be glad to begin the game of hazard again.

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From Lord Holland

September 21, 1840.

I am glad you have summoned a Cabinet, and hope that at it some plan which gives us a prospect of peace and reconciliation may be devised—five which I have enclosed have occurred, any one of which would give me hopes and one or two of which would certainly answer the purpose. We must not be deterred by the oracular phrase of Nicholas, ‘All or nothing,’ from adapting our measures to our means, especially when we furnish all those means and the others little or none, and when he (see his conversations with Bloomfield) avows that his objects in the treaty are different and even opposite to those which inclined us to sign it, ours being to secure general peace, his to bring about estrangement and war between England and France or change of dynasty and an invasion of the latter country.

To Lord Holland

September 22, 1840.

I send you a paper I wrote a few days ago. It is not good for much, but in this way one's ideas may be got clear. It seems to me there is now an opening. But having made the treaty we must try to avoid giving excuse for Russia to say that England has not kept her engagements, and that (as in 1827) she will consult only *ses intérêts et ses convenances*. In short, the matter is delicate and difficult. I have a letter from Spencer to-day blaming the pact and anxious to avoid war with France for the future.

From Lord Palmerston

September 23, 1840.

I am quite ashamed of not having sooner answered your Letter of the 14th, but I have been harassed to death. My official Letter about the officers was ill worded; it certainly seemed to imply that I meant Engineer or Artillery officers, but I only meant any that

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could be spared, of any kind. However, you are quite right in not weakening Malta at this moment, and if the want should arise on the coast of Syria we shall be able to find other means of supporting it. With respect to the general question as to the Department by which the correspondence arising out of the operations resulting from the Treaty of July ought to be carried on, I can assure you it never will be my wish to trench upon the province of a colleague ; but I think you have been misinformed as to the course of former practice in these matters. Whenever war exists, then of course the direction of all the operations of the war is in the hands of the Sec. of State for War and Colonies. But operations like those we are now engaged in, which are not war, which are connected with diplomatic transactions and which arise out of the execution of treaties, which we are engaged in carrying into effect in concert with other Powers, have hitherto been directed and conducted by the Sec. of State for Foreign Affairs ; and it seems to me, that it would be inconvenient for the Public Service that any different arrangement should be adopted. You know we have always held, and I think rightly, that we cannot be at war with Mehemet Ali, any more than we could with Don Carlos, because the one like the other is a subject of a friendly sovereign, and you cannot be at war with a Party with whom you cannot end the war by a treaty of peace. But you can make no treaty of peace with a subject who has no independent political existence. I trust that this explanation will satisfy you that I have not been poaching upon your Manor, and that you will agree with me in thinking that the moment has not yet arrived when the conduct of our operations in the Mediterranean ought to be handed over to the War Department. I hope most sincerely that the French Govt. may not be foolish enough to render such a transfer necessary, and I certainly do not think, in spite of their blustering language, that there is at present any apparent likelihood of their doing so.

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*From Lord Clarendon*¹

September 23, 1840.

I think the enclosed from Howden is worth your reading. I don't know what Palmerston's opinions are upon the opportunity which now presents itself for settling this vexed and dangerous question, but it seems to me that if M. Ali is forced, in consequence of the Treaty, to give up Arabia and Candia and were to be appointed Pacha of Syria for his life by the Sultan without, however, retaining Adana, and that France would join the Allies in declaring that she will adopt coercive measures against M. Ali if he attempts hereafter to disturb the arrangement, everybody's *pundonor* would be saved and the whole matter would be immediately settled. There is no doubt it would be for the interest of the Sultan, who would get back his Fleet and not have to raise an Army. He would receive tribute for Syria instead of putting himself to great expense to lose it, as he would not be able to assert his authority there against the various tribes which, however impatient they may be of M. Ali's rule, have no intention to place themselves under that of the Porte. France appears to have made great efforts during these concessions from M. Ali, and has thereby contracted a certain moral obligation to support him if they are refused; and when the slight difference between the offer first made by the Allies to M. Ali and the one now proposed by him to them is considered, I don't think that Parliament or the country would approve of our risking a war with France for an object so insignificant and in which no British interest is involved.

To Lord Holland

September 24, 1840.

I do not think my paper is any longer in date, after the proposals of M. Ali to Rifaat Bey. I have a letter

¹ Lord Privy Seal. See Sir Herbert Maxwell's *Life of the Fourth Earl of Clarendon*.

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from Lord Spencer, strongly urging Peace with France. There appear to me only two courses—to call Parliament and be prepared for war, or to make a new attempt at agreement and peace. I am for the last. I do not know what Melbourne thinks about it.

From Lord Clarendon

September 28, 1840.

The enclosed letter from Lord Holland states clearly why M. Ali's concessions should be accepted as the best fulfilment of the Treaty, and upon such grounds I don't think that even Russia would reject them unless she has ulterior designs with respect either to Turkey or France to which we could be no parties.

To M. Guizot, the French Ambassador

September 28, 1840.

I am very glad that you have not sought any conversation with me on the subject of the East, as it is essential that the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should be the organs of the Govt. in any communications on these matters. But as misapprehensions may arise from the language held by the *Morning Chronicle* and *Observer*, I think it necessary to assure you that these newspapers do not express the sentiments of the Government.

From Lord Palmerston

September 29, 1840.

With regard to the Question as to our Policy in these Turkish affairs, it would be very painful to me personally to think that you had altered the opinions which led you to concur in the Treaty of July, because it was your support which mainly carried that measure in the Cabinet—all I wish for now is that we should give that measure a fair trial, and not condemn and abandon it, even before

Broadlands
see Calver 1840.
p. 9. A

it has come into full operation. It may succeed or it may fail. If it should succeed then it would have been inexpedient to have given it up. If it should fail we shall then have to take our decision according to the circumstances of the case. I quite agree with the sentiment which you quote that if we must have war sooner or later, let it be later rather than sooner. But on the other hand, if we are to give up a policy to which the government is publicly pledged and engagements recorded in Treaties, whenever the newspapers of France may chose to threaten us with war, where is to be the ultimate limit of our submission, and what is to be the object of demand on their part which we shall at last think of sufficient importance to make a stand about, and to refuse to yield at the risk of having to back up our refusal by our arms?

You stated some time ago in the Cabinet that you would make war with France rather than allow her to conquer Morocco. But would she believe that we would do so, if she saw us now bend under her menaces? If now, when we are backed by three great Powers, one of them too a great naval Power, we were to stop in our own course, out of alarm at her threats of attacking us, is it to be believed that when she was ready to invade Morocco she would stop in her course out of alarm at our threats that we should single handed attack her? It must perpetually happen that the particular object of interest, to defend which a country stands out to resist an aggressive war, may in its separate and intrinsic value not be worth the expenses that must be incurred to defend it; but any nation which were to act upon the principle of yielding to every demand made upon it, if each separate demand could be shown not to involve directly and immediately a vital interest, would at no distant period find itself progressively stripped of the means of defending its vital interests when those interests came at last to be attacked.

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*To Lord Lansdowne*¹

October 11, 1840.

Guizot's note, or rather the note of Thiers to Guizot, was read to us yesterday, and is quite satisfactory as to present danger of war. It only threatens action, in case we attempt to depose, by means of execution, the Pacha of Egypt. It leaves open the way to an 'acceptable arrangement' . . . I quite agree with you that we might give the terms of the treaty, but Palmerston does not like the Pacha to have any part of Syria.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 12, 1840.

I think it is of essential importance that you should come up on Wednesday to be ready for a Cabinet on Thursday, or if there is not a Cabinet to arrange with Palmerston the terms of the answer to the note of M. Thiers. Guizot told me last night that it was the utmost effort of the peace party, supported by the King, and if not taken advantage of now, the war-cry would turn against the Government and prevail. I think it necessary that what we do in the next ten days should be deliberately weighed, and peace, if now in our hands, not be thrown away.

From Lord Clarendon

October 12, 1840.

I had hoped to receive the summons for another Cabinet that we might hear what communication had been made to Guizot and what answer was to be given to the French note. The note was, I doubt not, the work of L. Philippe, turning to account the dissensions of his Cabinet, and if the peaceful object with which it was framed and the intention of settling matters before the Chambers meet are to have no assistance from us, we

¹ The third Marquess; President of the Council; 'the Nestor of the Whigs.'

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shall not only disappoint and mortify the King but place him more than ever at the mercy of the War Party. Even if we met these advances in the most friendly spirit I think it will be difficult for the French Ministers to defend their having ordonnanced 170 millions and then having written an ultimatum without insolence, or threat ; but if the sacrifice they have made and the risk they must run are treated with contempt by the *Conference*, the French will be justified in thinking that such obstinate harshness portends some ulterior designs against them on the part of England and her Allies, and we must take the consequences of such an opinion. I am certain that with a sincere desire of preserving peace and making up the quarrel honourably everything might have been settled *on Saturday night* with Guizot ; but every hour's delay in replying to his note is an affront by proving that we are insincere and indifferent about reconciliation with France. And can anything be more indicative of both than the article in the *Morning Chronicle* of to-day, which shows that the Editor is aware of the overtures made by the French, and then tells them that Syria is virtually pacific, St. J. d'Acre probably taken, and that Alexandria will certainly be bombarded unless M. Ali and the French swallow the Treaty whole ? If the enclosed letter from Howden gives, as I have no doubt it does, a correct account of things at Paris, surely it is unjustifiable in us not to assist L. Philippe out of his difficulties, and if we do it should be done with good grace and not spitefully. If Brunnov is the obstacle again Melbourne should really see him and tell him our position and the various things of which the Emperor must necessarily be ignorant.

*From the Duke of Bedford*¹

October 15, 1840.

I told you, the other day, that I was not capable of advising you in your present difficulties. You know my

¹ Eldest brother of Lord John Russell. Succeeded his father, the sixth Duke, in 1839.

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opinion was that, after having consented to the treaty, you had no case for breaking up the Govt., or separating yourself from Palmerston. The aspect of the affair has changed since that. New ground has been offered to you by France, which, you tell me, leaves you fuller scope to indulge your pacific feelings. What the decision of the Cabinet was with respect to that offer I know not, but Chas. G. [Greville] informs me that no notice has been taken of it, while Pal. continues to direct menacing and irritating articles in the *M. Chronicle*, contrary to the feelings and decisions of his colleagues. If this is true, there is ample ground for your expressing a firm and decided tone, as Mr. Pitt (Ld. Chatham) did when he declared he wd. not act in a Cabinet with Mr. Fox, or as *The Times* did more recently, with respect to Ld. Wellesley. However, as you have no proof of this it wd. be difficult for you to act upon it except in the way I suggested yesterday through Melbourne. But you have other and better ground on which you may now take your stand, and more agreeable, because not personal. It is to say at once in the Cabinet what course shd. be taken in reply to any communication from France. If agreed to, to *insist* upon its being acted upon, promptly, and in a conciliatory spirit—and then to resign if the decision of the Cabinet is not fully and fairly carried out by Palmerston. If you are not supported by your colleagues, that again wd. be another ground for resignation. Althorp is against the experiment of breaking up the present Govt. Palmerston's position against you has been, till now, impregnable, supposing that he has not in any way violated the spirit and intentions of the treaty; but if he evades or disregards your decisions now, the case is entirely altered, and you are free to follow any course you may think right. This is the result of my thoughts on the subject, and I give it for your best consideration. An opportunity lost now may not be recovered.

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From Lord Clarendon

October 18, 1840.

Pray read the enclosed from Crowe, the Correspondent of the *M. Chronicle* at Paris. I have known him for many years and have confidence in his judgment and in his sources of information. You will see what he says of the insulting articles in the *Chronicle* last week. The question of war is evidently getting out of the control of the King and the Government unless L. Philippe, who always has the luck of being shot at just before a troublesome subject is to be discussed in the Chamber, is able to turn this fresh *attentat* to account. We might do the same, *if we were disposed*, and make it an excuse for conciliation. If the case were properly put to Russia she would understand how prejudicial to us a revolution or a change of dynasty in France would be, and that we should be allowed some latitude for preventing such a state of things.

To Lord Melbourne

October 22, 1840.

I see all the evils and mischiefs of a meeting of Parliament, and I think it may be possible to avoid it. But then we must be in some way prepared to assent to Metternich's suggestions, and open the whole question of negotiating with France on any propositions Austria may be disposed to make. I should be very glad to leave the initiative to Austria, who is the Power most interested and most disinterested; having a great interest in the welfare of Turkey, and no peculiar objects of her own. Lansdowne is much against meeting Parliament, until the necessity is proved. Macaulay ditto, but less inclined to an accommodation than Lansdowne. We shall know in a week more the reception of our note in France, and the progress made by the insurgents in Syria. They seem to be very weak both in numbers and in disposition to act otherwise than as desultory guerrillas. Ellice is

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quite right about the Press—a firm tone, without insult, is the best course they can take. I do not see when you are told that the articles in the newspapers form part of the conduct of the negotiations how you can avoid giving your opinion to those who direct their insertion.

To a Cabinet Colleague

October 24, 1840.

The death of Lord Holland is indeed a severe blow—and tho' his health had been so much impaired by gout I saw no reason to expect it, when I was with him last week. For himself, there were few things to disquiet him at present, but the turn of political affairs might have become a serious vexation to him. I do not think he could have remained with us to see a war with France. But his strong affection for several of us would have made any estrangement very painful. Matters seem to go well in Syria, and it is always to be recollected that the power of M. Ali was a rapid creation in that country, and may have as sudden a fall. I doubt, however, whether we shall get Damascus and Aleppo without a more powerful effort. If so, a new chapter is opened, and the question occurs, Will you negotiate before you make that effort? We ought soon to have news to the 10th Octr.

I have no fear for Dover Castle, but troops ought to be sent to the South & East Coast & Plymouth, if there are any to spare. You should ask for the force in each district, compared with 1837-8-9. Lancashire is very safe.

From Lady Holland

Tuesday.

My dear John, Your affectionate letter was a balm to my wounded heart.¹ I am Here! Here! *Holland House*, the scene of all my past happiness, the scene of cheerfulness, taste, refinement and all that adorns

¹ Lord Holland died on October 22, 1840.

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polished life, innocent and intellectual, which the dreadful emblem over its once hospitable door denotes to be extinguished. My heart is almost broken. I have not ventured into any room we inhabited, but every shrub and tree is full of associations, the buds and blossoms recall his classical and various quotations, enriched by his creative genius with many happy applications—in short his voice, his wit and tenderness are always by my side and quite upset my composure.

To Lord Melbourne

Bradley

October 25, 1840.

A
Matters in France are very serious. I think if Thiers insisted on fresh armaments he must have meant *la guerre à tout prix*, and his late pacific notes must have been intended to deceive us. In that case the King, if he meant peace, had no choice. He has great skill, but he draws upon it very largely. Guizot is not popular, and may be goaded into a stiff attitude towards foreign Powers, which will make peace difficult to be preserved. I think you were quite right not to give Guizot any hope of a part of Syria. It will be another question whether we can now help Louis Philippe to keep his head above water. B

From Lord Clarendon

November 1, 1840.

I send you a letter from Crowe because I believe his information may be relied upon. I had yesterday a long conversation with Melbourne, who says he wishes to conciliate the French and to assist Guizot, Leopold having forwarded an urgent petition to that effect from L. Philippe; but he showed me a letter from Palmerston, who appears resolutely determined upon not swerving an inch from his course. He says that Thiers' bullying and subsequent resignation were got up between him and the King, first to frighten the Allies and then to appease them. Melbourne thinks that the calling Parlt. together

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should depend upon L. Philippe's speech. If its tune is pacific, we may assume that there is no necessity for us to buckle on our armour; if it is menacing, we must then prepare ourselves forthwith. Palmerston, he told me, is very desirous that Parlt. should not meet just yet, and if this is so he can prevent it by making such a communication to Paris as may modify any warlike paragraph in the King's Speech. There is still time.

To Lord Melbourne

November 2, 1840.

I am sorry to say I derive little comfort from your letter. I do not believe either that Ibrahim Pacha will be driven out of Syria, or that we shall be forced to leave it. We shall probably go on for the next two months keeping one another at arm's length, we neither daring to march into the interior, nor he to attack troops protected by our ships. Palmerston was here yesterday, and was very handsomely civil about the reply to Metternich. But he held out no hope of anything more in the way of concession than he has already done.

*From Charles Greville*¹

November, 1840.

All that you say is quite true. The practical difficulties are very great; but the danger is also very great, and the difficulties which surround Guizot are big with consequences deeply affecting us. But the greatest difficulties may be surmounted where there is a hearty desire, an honest determination to overcome them; without these, the smallest difficulty will be an insurmountable obstacle. I entirely agree with you about Syria, but what says Guizot? '*L'état de la Syrie est pour la France une raison de se montrer plus facile à satisfaire.*' They evidently don't want restitution there

¹ Clerk of the Privy Council, author of the celebrated journal, and an intimate friend of Lord John and the Duke of Bedford.

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—they accept the fact of the accomplishment of the treaty. A final settlement must later take place. The wounded vanity of France desires to be admitted as a party to that settlement, and that its terms should be such as to indicate that she has had a potential voice in it. If this will prevent war and restore harmony it is well worth taking some pains to bring it about. Difficulties, objections, resistance, will be found in other quarters: if there is a sincere desire to accomplish the object, it will be accomplished in spite of them all; but if there is no real desire for a *rapprochement* to France, and a determination (secret or avowed) to defy her, of course nothing will be done, and we must abide the danger. ‘Ce n’est pas l’étendue, c’est le *fait* du sacrifice qui importe.’ This proves how very little will be the sacrifice required.

From Lord Clarendon

December 6, 1840.

I hear from a person at Paris who generally gives me correct information that the present Govt. is quietly making prodigious exertions to get together the material for war. Levies are not to be raised, as men are soon got together and are sooner organised in France than in any other country; but in all other respects the preparations ordered by the Thiers administration are actively proceeding.

CHAPTER II

THE FALL OF THE WHIGS

DESPITE the personal triumph of Palmerston in the crisis of 1840 it was clear that the Whigs, after a decade of office, were nearing the end of their course. Stagnant trade, bad harvests, and timid finance had produced recurring deficits, and Ministers were not in agreement how to meet the situation. While Melbourne remained an impenitent Protectionist, Lord John was impressed, though not yet converted, by the arguments of the Anti-Corn Law League. As early as 1839 he had expressed his preference for a moderate fixed duty; but Baring, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed to confine himself to a readjustment of the sugar and timber duties. Lord John insisted on grappling with the Corn Laws, and the Cabinet finally resolved to recommend a fixed duty of eight shillings per quarter. Instead, however, of presenting the Budget proposals as a whole, Baring explained his plans on April 30, while Lord John announced that he would introduce a discussion on the Corn Laws on May 31.

The debate on the sugar duties ended with the defeat of the Government; but despite the protests of his colleagues, Melbourne decided to dissolve rather than to resign. Before, however, the Leader of the House could explain the Ministerial plans with regard to the Corn Laws, Peel moved a vote of want of confidence, which was carried by a majority of one. Even now the Prime Minister refused to resign, believing that the policy

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of lowered duties would secure the support of the country. He was speedily undeceived, for the Whigs were routed ; but Lord John accepted an invitation to stand for the City of London, and was elected to the seat which he held for the next eighteen years. The Melbourne Government met the new Parliament and only resigned on August 27, after a decisive defeat in the debate on the Address. Despite his natural abilities and personal charm, the ex-Tory Melbourne had too little faith either in Whig principles or Whig measures to inspire his followers ; and the eyes of the party now turned from the disillusioned statesman who had lost his zest in life to the hero of the Reform Bill, to whom the Whig faith was a religion, whose reputation had grown without interruption during eleven years of office, who had proved his worth in council, administration, and debate, and whose confidence in himself was as firmly grounded as the trust which he inspired in colleagues and friends within and without the walls of St. Stephen's. Directly after the election Lord John, who had lost his first wife in 1839, married Lady Fanny Elliot, daughter of the Earl of Minto, and received the well-merited congratulations of his family and friends.

From Lord William Russell

Berlin : February 2, 1841.

Your view of public affairs is gloomy enough, but things look better. Yankee Doodle will not go to war, I guess, and the Frenchman without an ally in the world would be very foolish to hit in a blow ; but you should put a plaister to his wounded vanity, then he will be like a lamb, but this armed peace is worse than war. You must not throw up the Ministry without trying a dissolution ; it would be an abandonment of the Queen and Ireland quite inexcusable. Besides this your Ministry

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has done such great things at home and abroad that your resignation would be a calamity you are not justified in bringing upon us. So courage—persevere, and your country and posterity will reward you.

From Lord Lansdowne

February, 1841.

I may as well state what appears to me the state of the case as to the budget. By far the best course, which I think ought to be pressed if there is a chance of carrying it, is the present tax for three years and the additional 2 per cent. for one. It is quite consistent and meets the most reasonable objection I hear made everywhere, that the addition may be unnecessarily prolonged, and the publick have a fair right to see how the uncertain chances of the revenue may turn out. The two other courses are the whole five per cent. for one year to be reconsidered in the year following, and the three per cent. for three years, the deficiency to be made up by Exchequer bills and other expedients to be provided for next year. Of these the first is in appearance the best for the Government, the second, I think, the best for the publick. It is a great object to secure so great a mass of revenue as the three per cent., untouched ; and the leaving it open will infallibly expose you to all sorts of attempts to alter the system of taxation, which it will be unwise to accede to and difficult to resist. We may possibly, though it will not be agreeable, submit to either of these ; but I assume that you will in no case, as things now stand, consent to any reduction of estimate, but will instantly resign if any such should be carried.

*From Lord Normanby*¹

May 10, 1841.

You know the inclination of my mind as at first in favour of a dissolution instead of resignation, and as I see this morning there is a fierce attempt on the part of

¹ First Marquess ; Home Secretary ; later Ambassador at Paris.

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the more eager of our friends to dragoon us into that course by means of the large type and hard words of the *Chronicle*. The result of the last two or three days' reflexions, when, being confined to the house, I have been much alone, has been to convince me that if we yield to that compulsion we shall allow ourselves to be driven into political suicide. I cannot (feeling this very strongly and knowing how you will be bent on the other side) help giving you a few of the reasons which strike me as conclusive against the wisdom of taking such a step. You will have observed the other day that in almost all the speculations as to possible gains, the seats in question were those to be won by money. We know pretty well from past experience on which side this influence will preponderate. Whatever feeling the change in the Corn Laws may produce in public opinion generally, I am sure full credit is taken in those calculations for its possible present influence on any of the Constituent Bodies, whilst on the other hand no force is allowed to the equally possible effort of Chartist distraction, Anti-Slavery feeling and Anti-Poor Law legislation, and forbearance is imposed in some counties from which I fear the last vestiges of Whig representation will surely be removed. Under these circumstances the most favourable result I can make out would be that in the three kingdoms we might upon the balance lose only fifteen seats, thus giving them a majority of between thirty and forty. Can anyone deny that such a result would more than any other tend to place the Queen entirely in their power for a six years' lease of Government? For this would not be an indifferent or fluctuating majority, but one deeply pledged on all these questions and sent there by opposing interests to hold their own. The more clamour the minority might make, the more would Peel with his usual plausibility profess his determination to abide by the verdict of the Constituency of the Reform Bill created by us upon an issue which we had chosen our own time to try.

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To Lord Melbourne

May 14, 1841.

I see that in 1839 you said on resuming office that you did not care for the imputation of wishing to cling to power, but that you were resolved not to incur the imputation of abandoning your friends and your party. I fear that with the strong feeling entertained among our friends this is precisely the imputation which you will incur, and the only way of avoiding it is to adopt the course proposed by the Chancellor and Palmerston. You have put the question at present in rather an awkward position. If the Cabinet decide to resign on your proposition they are responsible; but if you say that you are determined to resign, there is no room for deliberation, and I can only announce that as you had determined to tender your resignation, your colleagues, including myself, had of course done the same. And then some of the more violent will quote your own words against you, just as the Tories will quote other words, if you propose to dissolve.

To Lord Melbourne

May 16, 1841.

Sir H. Vivian gave me last night a further account of his conversation with Hardinge. Hardinge told him that we could not dissolve, as they would find means to prevent it; but that when they came in they should dissolve at once, pass an order in Council for the collection of the Sugar duties, and look to a Bill of Indemnity from the new Parliament, in which they should have a majority of seventy. I think the Queen would be justified in resisting this course. It is true it is the one followed in 1807, but it was protested against by Lord Holland on the ground that there was no public necessity for a dissolution. Such a proposal then would be made by Peel on accepting office. It would at once bring the Queen and the Tory party into conflict, and I am strongly of opinion that it is better to give her the shield of

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responsible advisers than to leave her alone to submit or contend with a powerful party.

From the Duke of Bedford

June 9, 1841.

These Tory proceedings in the Elections are very disgraceful, especially in a party supported by the Church, and professing to have the support of the most religious portion of the community. The country is altogether in a prosperous and happy state. The Poor Law Act has saved the land, the Tithe Act has saved the Church and fortified the Establishment at every point, giving increased incomes to the Clergy, combined with perfect security of their property. All interests are doing well except certain labourers in North Devon, who get, I'm told, only six and seven shillings a week ! too bad ! and those Electors who are demoralised by Tory bribes and feasting.

From Lord William Russell

Berlin : June 16, 1841.

I have received your letter announcing your marriage. I wish you joy, and hope it may bring you all the happiness you deserve. But you are a perfect salamander to live in such flames ; you set fire to the country and to a lady's heart at the same time, and you flourish in the general conflagrations. I am not acquainted with Lady Fanny Elliot, but her friend Mr. Howard speaks very highly of her.

There is a general wish in this country that you should remain in office. The Tories give no satisfaction and no hope of a long reign, and all their old Prussian friends have given them up. You ask me what you can do for me. Nothing, but I thank you for the offer. Your struggle is magnificent and full of interest.

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*From Charles Buller*¹

June 18, 1841.

On thinking over the matter, which you proposed to me yesterday, I have come to the conclusion that, however strong the objections which then occurred to me, there are other considerations which ought to have more weight with me. I feel that this is not a moment in which ordinary considerations of personal interest would justify any member of the Liberal party in shrinking from identifying himself with the great principles of which you have made yourself the champion and representative. To connect myself with such a cause, and those who are now struggling for it, is worth some personal risk ; and I am therefore glad to accept the offer you made me yesterday.

*From Lord Howick*²

July 22, 1841.

I must in the first place congratulate you most sincerely upon your marriage, which has, I presume, taken place. Lady Howick joins with me in doing this and in wishing every happiness to you and to Lady John.

I am much obliged to you for writing so kind a letter, notwithstanding my having ventured to preach to you a little. I can assure you I have no wish to allow whatever talents I may possess to 'grow rusty for want of use.' On the contrary, I should be very glad to get back into the House of Commons, and while you are there I have the strongest assurance that I should have a leader under whom I act with pleasure and confidence. For a good many years I have found that I always concur in the principles upon which your conduct is founded, and very seldom indeed differ from you as to the manner in which

¹ Accepting the post of Secretary to the Board of Control.

² Eldest son of the second Earl Grey. He had resigned from the Ministry in 1839.

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those principles should be carried out. But though I should be very glad to find myself once more acting with you in the House of Commons, I am not of opinion that I should get back there by taking any seat which it would be possible to make over to me. I should not like since the passing of the Reform Bill to come in as for a nomination borough, and it would be highly inexpedient in the present state of affairs needlessly to have a new election for any place having a considerable body of constituents. I have no doubt that before very long circumstances will naturally produce some opening or other of which I may avail myself to return into Parliament.

From Lady Holland

July 22, 1841.

You are fully aware, dearest John, of my long and deep affection for you, therefore a congratulatory formal letter is not necessary to convince you how from the bottom of my heart I wish you every happiness and comfort in your present condition. The knowledge I have of your admirable bride makes me feel confident that all my wishes will be realised. God bless you both.

Your address, which only appeared this morning, is even and temperate, and will doubtless have a great effect upon the public mind, and will settle the foolish opinion which has been very prevalent of the resignation of ministers before a decisive division.

To Lady Holland

Bexhill: July 27, 1841.

Many thanks for your kind congratulations. We are in a most charming house here, and the surrounding walks are beautiful. Nothing is wanting but a little fine weather. But I am so happy in having such a wife that I cannot be dissatisfied with anything.

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From Edward Ellice ¹

July 30, 1841.

You are the best judge of what satisfies the 'meaning and intent' of your own address, and we shall be content with what you think for the best. I am generally disposed to agree with you that it is better to bide the time than to make irrevocable decisions in anticipation of it; but as I think the whole course taken since the proposition of the Budget the right one—even if we could have exactly foreseen the consequences—I am very anxious that the last act shall carry with it the appearance of firmness of purpose, and a convincing conviction of the justice of our policy. I dislike all wavering. Lord Melbourne also has been in communication with Lord Fitzwilliam and others on the subject of the address, if he has not devised a circular to be written summoning the Peers for it. The Tory press has unanimously condemned your meeting Parliament—but above all for making the speech (for your address led to the same inference with them) after your admission that the returns have decided the fate of the Government. *A fortiori*, they will say, you could not have required the additional proof of your being in the minority by a division on the speeches, and that your only objects in clinging to office were to embarrass them, and to enjoy power and emolument to the last moment. Indeed, unless you remain to take the sense of Parliament on the principles at issue between the parties, the ground on which you profess to remain in office is taken from you. A division on the Speaker may not necessarily involve a decision on them. I do not know that Lefevre entertains exactly your opinions on the Corn Laws, and personal and other motives, distinct from party considerations, may be said to influence (altho' I do not think they will)

¹ Commonly known as 'the Bear,' from his connection with the Canadian fur trade. Though no longer in office, he remained a confidential adviser of his Whig friends.

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a vote on the particular question. A Tory speech is less difficult than a Tory amendment. It will contain merely the words you put into the Queen's mouth at the dissolution, with certain qualifications with respect to the necessary protection for existing interests—and on the head of violent and sudden changes—that will make it read well enough to the country; but it will in fact contain exactly the elements of party prescription at the Tamworth dinner. His amendment indeed would be of the same description, with some grains of the want of confidence vote of last session and the agreement in it of this House of Commons.

To Lord Melbourne

August 4, 1841.

I agree with you as to the matter of the Queen's Speech. But Spencer's difficulty having occurred to me before, I had resolved it in my own mind in this way—that the Queen should say, in conformity to usage and precedent, 'You will consider *whether* by an alteration of the protective and differential duties on . . . you may not be enabled to increase the public revenue, to improve trade, and afford to the people the means of procuring the necessaries of life at moderate and steady prices' (these are not the words but the sense), and then that the Address should say 'We are *strongly persuaded* that by an alteration,' etc.—which commits the Queen only to deliberation, while it pledges us to conclusion. I am more persuaded than I have yet been that if the Tories chose a Tory Speaker, we ought at once to resign. It would free us from the necessity of asking any further test of the opinions of the House of Commons; and, gloss it as we may, it will be a great blow to have the new House of Commons pledged against us to the end of their parliamentary lives. Many of course do not feel this, but I am so sure of the advantage Peel will gain thereby that I think he will not oppose the Speaker, that he may have this advantage. I will be prepared with

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my notion of a Queen's Speech if we have to make one. It is not easy. I believe I was right to state the opinions of the H. of Commons as I have done ; for I have laid on the county members of England that which properly belongs to them, the burden of standing singly in the way against Corn Law Reform. I mean to play upon this string till I make them give up their monopoly.

To Lord Melbourne

August 6, 1841.

Friday does very well for the dinner. I will try now my hand at the Speech. After foreign affairs, etc.

‘The extraordinary expenses which the events in Canada, China, and the Mediterranean have occasioned, and the necessity of maintaining a force adequate to the protection of the various portions of our extended possessions, have made it necessary to consider the means of augmenting the revenue. I am anxious that this object should be effected in the manner least burthensome to my People. It has appeared to me, on full deliberation, that you may at *this juncture* divert your attention to the revision of duties affecting the productions of foreign countries. Some of these duties are so trifling in amount as to be unproductive to the revenue, while they are vexatious to commerce. Others are founded on a principle of protection carried to an extreme injurious alike to the income of the State, and to the interests of the industrious classes.

‘I am desirous, in particular, that you should consider the laws which regulate the trade in corn. It will be for you to determine whether these laws do not aggravate the fluctuations of supply caused by the diversity of seasons in different years, whether they do not embarrass trade, derange the currency, and by enhancing the price of food, diminish the comfort, and increase the privations of the labourer and artizan.

‘Feeling the deepest sympathy with that portion of my people who are now suffering from distress and want

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of employment, it is my earnest prayer that your decision upon these important questions may be guided by wisdom, may be matured by impartial discussion, and may conduce to the happiness of my beloved People.'

To Lord Melbourne

August 13, 1841.

The outline I sent you is liable to Baring's criticism that it does to a certain extent pledge the Crown. But in working out my own proposition, I found it impossible to effect my object. In fact the Crown cannot mention the tariff, or the Corn Laws, without implying that this is an occasion for raising them. Otherwise the Queen might as well speak of the repeal of the Reform Act, and Vote by Ballot. The only way then is to imply this revision as cautiously in terms as possible in the Speech, and as strongly as possible in the Address.

2. I had understood that we were agreed upon Labouchere's repeal of small duties, tho' we did not intend to press it this year. Now, however, that we are forced to show our whole scheme, it is quite fair to include this part.

3. It will be necessary to mention Canada and the Debt. The other expenses mentioned by Lord Sydenham were authorised by my dispatch to him, which I read to the Cabinet. Indeed I carried as far as possible the limit and restriction to fortification, and have only allowed him to go to the extent of the vote of the present year—namely, £108,000. If the Cabinet had disagreed with me, which they did not, I should have advised them to give up Canada at once.

From Princess Lieven¹ to Lord William Russell

Paris: Sept. 2, 1841

Votre frère vient de faire lundi dernier un noble et superbe discours au parlement en annonçant sa retraite.

¹ Princess Lieven, after a long residence in London as the wife of the Russian Ambassador, had migrated to Paris, where she spent the remainder of her life. See E. Daudet, *La Vie d'une Ambassadrice*.

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S'il y a des cabinets et des personnes qui se réjouissent de la chute du Ministère Whig (et il y en a beaucoup car cela les délivre de Lord Palmerston) *tout le monde* est unanime dans le respect et les excellens sentimens qu'on porte à Lord John. Il s'est fait un très grand nom, et la plus haute position qu'un homme puisse avoir dans son pays. And now, my dear Lord William, I am anxious to know what will become of you ? Encore une fois, si vous ne restez pas à Berlin, venez me voir à Paris, je vous en prie. Je ne sais encore qui sera ambassadeur ici. On croit toujours Lord Cowley. Les Granvilles iront à Nice dans six semaines. Il va mieux certainement. Le discours de Sir Robert Peel a fait un grand effet ici et contribuera beaucoup à adoucir et à effacer tous les ressentimens. On annoncera la semaine prochaine M. de St. Aulaire pour Londres. The other appointments will probably follow. Nothing new here. Adieu, écrivez moi, je vous en prie. Mille amitiés sincères.

CHAPTER III

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

AFTER the resignation of his Government Melbourne's health deteriorated rapidly, and he ceased to play an active part in public life. Lord John thus became the acknowledged leader of the Whigs, and his fitness for the post was recognised by foes no less than by friends. He enjoyed the confidence of all his colleagues, including Brougham, who sulked in his tent, emerging at intervals to attack his old associates.

Despite the courage and capacity of their leader, the Whigs were weak, weary, and divided. Peel was master of the situation, and the deficit was handled in virile fashion by the revival of the income-tax and a sweeping revision of the tariff. The tension with France was succeeded by an *entente cordiale* based on the mutual confidence of Guizot and the new Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen, which was, however, denounced by Palmerston as a policy of fruitless sacrifice and surrender. When Peel introduced a new sliding-scale for corn, Lord John urged the claims of a moderate fixed duty; but some of the leading Whigs, first among them Lord Spencer, became convinced that the Corn Laws must disappear. Lord Howick agreed that their abolition was the first and most important step in grappling with 'the condition of England question,' in regard to which several of Lord John's correspondents had proposals to make. The Whigs, however, were divided on questions

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of social reform no less than on Free Trade ; and Lord Fitzwilliam angrily complained to the Duke of Bedford that the leader of the Opposition was committing his party by voting for Lord Ashley's Ten Hours Bill. In relation to Ireland, where the Repeal campaign had swept the whole Catholic population off its feet, Lord John, while refusing to bow the knee to O'Connell, was eager to remove abuses in the sphere of religious disabilities and land tenure.

In 1844 the tide began to turn, and Peel no longer commanded the enthusiastic allegiance of the whole of his party. An attempt to deal with the sugar duties proved as disastrous to the Tories in 1844 as to the Whigs in 1841. The Government was defeated, and though Peel brought his rebellious followers to heel by a threat of resignation, discontent began to spread rapidly throughout the ministerial ranks. The session of 1845 revealed the Prime Minister drifting ever farther away from his own right wing and receiving increasing support from the Leader of the Opposition. A bold programme of Irish reform, increasing the grant to Maynooth, creating three Queen's Colleges, and proposing compensation to tenants for unexhausted improvements, appealed more to the Whig than to the Tory mind. The third proposal was introduced in the Upper House and never reached the Commons, while the Maynooth grant aroused shrill cries of 'No Popery.' Peel stuck to his guns ; but he could not have carried his Bill without the steadfast support of the Leader of the Opposition. 'Peel lives, moves, and has his being through Lord John Russell,' observed the evangelical Ashley, and Greville noted in his diary that Peel was more of a Whig than a Tory. Before the year was out the two leading statesmen of England declared for a policy that

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was to rend the ministerial ranks and to mould the destiny of parties for a generation.

To Lord Melbourne

October 9, 1841.

I was very glad to find you had made so good and effective a speech in the House of Lords. It is obvious that Peel feels the necessity for preparing measures for setting right our finances, and improving our laws on corn and other foreign trade. I do not suppose anyone would wish to oppose him on the Address, unless he does something outrageous before Parliament meets again. In fact it is very desirable that he should pass both a Corn Bill and a Poor Bill, and be responsible for them. I cannot think he will be able to satisfy the country about corn. The faults of the present law get more and more known. I believe they mean to give me a dinner in the City when London is full. This may be in December and might do for a declaration.

From Lord Palmerston

October 12, 1841.

What you say of O'Connell is true. He will be a great difficulty for us. To act with him will often be impossible ; to break openly with him would be hurtful. But perhaps the safest course would be to let things take their own way in this respect ; to receive and thank him for his support when he chuses to give it us ; but never to give him our support when we disapprove of the steps he is about to take. In this way perhaps we may preserve in opposition nearly the same relations with him which we had in office. Nine times out of ten he will support us in any move we may wish to make ; and he probably will not take it much amiss if we do not support him upon motions on which he knows that we have never agreed with him. But even if he should take it amiss we cannot help it, and his support and good

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will would not be worth purchasing at the price of our own opinions and characters. It seems to me, therefore, that it might be better not to have any general explanation with him now, unless he were to force it upon you by any communication made by him to you ; but that it would be preferable to let any such explanation, if requisite, arise out of circumstances and events in the next Session of Parliament. You might give him pretence for offence by writing to him now to say on what points you would and on what you would not agree with him, and an explanatory correspondence not rendered necessary by any special difference or dispute is apt to do more harm than good. I hear that O'Connell is likely to be elected Lord Mayor of Dublin. That would be uncommonly good fun ; what would the Lord and Lady Lieutenant do ? Would they send the Lord Mayor to Coventry to punish the Repealer, or would they grant a temporary amnesty to the Repealer out of consideration for the Lord Mayor ?

I have been sounded from two or three quarters as to my feelings about organic changes. I suppose the Radicals want to know the sentiments of each member of the late Government. I said that I conceived the three main questions put forward by those who want further changes to be Shorter Parliaments, Extension of Suffrage, and Ballot. That as to shortening Parliaments any proposal to that effect now would in my opinion be perfectly ludicrous, seeing that in the fifteen years which have elapsed since October, 1826, we have had, including the present, seven Parliaments ; and that it was therefore wholly unnecessary for me to state the objections which in principle I felt to such a measure. That as to Extension of Suffrage I have no objection to numerous Electors, and think that the only proper limit for the Suffrage is intelligence to judge, and independence to vote. But as the persons who spoke to me seemed to think that any great extension of the Franchise would be more favourable to the Tories than to the Liberals,

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perhaps that question is not likely to be very much pressed. As to Ballot I said that I am aware that much may be said for it, as well as against it, but that on the whole I am adverse to it ; not because I am unwilling to enable men to vote as they like, but because I doubt very much that any system of Ballot would accomplish that purpose, and because I think it would alter injuriously the character of Elections ; and is not in my opinion consistent with the spirit of the Constitution, which requires that all political acts should be done in public, and that all persons who have to perform them should be responsible to public opinion for what they may do.

To Lady Holland

October 20, 1841.

I wish you would try your best to read or have read to you books that require some exertion of mind to follow, and give occasion to reflexion afterwards. Reading for amusement fails at last to give amusement.

For my part I make no preparation for the session, for no one can say what will come on. Matters look gloomy in America, and not very well at home. But if Sir Robert Peel follows our line, as he seems to be doing in Ireland, and can drag his bumpkins after him, he may do very well.

To Lady Holland

October 27, 1841.

I suppose Peel and Aberdeen will be wise enough not to get us into a war with America. But how are they to manage the taxes and the Corn Law? The block-heads of their party will make their insurrection, as Canning said was periodical.

To Lord Lansdowne

November 12, 1841.

The birth of the Prince of Wales is a very happy event, and as I believe more to the advantage of the

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Queen than of her Ministers. The Tories are now obliged to be loyal, and thus all parties will unite in praise of the Queen. The curious question remains : what will Sir R. Peel do on the Corn Law ? I think his reserve has led him into great difficulty. If he does a good deal, the Squires will say with some reason that they have been betrayed, and if he produces some small measure, the attack from the manufacturing community will be sharp. Nous verrons. I asked Melbourne some time ago whether he thought I should act with O'Connell in opposition. He has postponed his answer till the time comes. I have pretty nearly decided in my own mind that, however ready I may be to listen to any suggestion of O'Connell's, I can have no party concert with him. He has declared the extension of the Reform Bill and the making Repeal an open question to be necessary conditions without which he would not support any future government. I do not see how I am to act with a man of this political creed.

To Lady Holland

November 13, 1841.

The dockyards are all in full activity, and it all looks as if Peel was coming out with some heavy plan of taxation. He has made his bed, and he must lie in it as well as he can. I suspect but uneasily. The Tories are made of sterner stuff than he supposes.

To Lady Holland

December 11, 1841.

I have been reading several of Mr. Fox's great speeches lately. They are beyond comparison the best ever spoken in Parliament. But I am almost as much struck by his want of prudence in conducting opposition as by his genius and eloquence. Pitt's are astonishingly meagre and commonplace ; but he speaks some practical sense, which in this country goes a long way.

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From Lord William Russell

Vienna: January 9, 1842.

I have received your letter from Endsleigh of the 19th, and am glad to hear that you are all in good health, and that when your political bow has been sufficiently relaxed you mean to string it again. The country has need to hear your voice, to be roused from its torpor, for we have quite lost the grand position taken for us by the late Ministry; the low tone, as you say, adopted by Peel, the concessions in America, the vacillations in India, combined with the falling off of the revenue and distress in England have led to the belief that we are in a declining state, a belief, as you may imagine, that has been promoted and spread by foreign diplomatists, and swallowed by the credulous mass. This has not been combated or boldly met by our agents, who in the narrow spirit of party attribute it to the misgovernment of their predecessors. However, there is no fear of war, public opinion is against it, and no Government is strong enough to fly in the face of public opinion. The French alone could carry public opinion with them, but they got such a lesson from Palmerston that they will not try it again. I said at the time, and told the King of Prussia, that he, P., had secured to us ten years of peace, and so it will turn out if the Tories don't mar the matter. But war is made now by Commercial Treaties, not by powder and shot, not by hewing and slashing but by starving people afar off by refusing their manual produce. The *Edinburgh Review* may sneer at F. List¹ and his system, but all Nations are putting it into practice. If Lord Westmoreland had attended to his duty instead of capering at Cologne behind the K. of P. with Ld. de Grey and Cardigan like three tomfools, he might have saved us from the last blow aimed by the Zollverein, for Prussia is omnipotent with the League, and the

¹ List's *National System of Political Economy*, advocating Protection and the development of natural resources, was published in 1841.

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remonstrances of England would have been attended to. Russia in her outward and ostensible bearing gives satisfaction, but she always works like a mole under ground, and no one knows where she will come up ; her last appearance was to displace the Milosch family in Wallachia. But she cannot go to war. Her hands are full with the Caucasus, where she has sent a new General to repair the defeat of the last. With this war unsettled she cannot meddle with Turkey, where, I am sorry to say, Sir S. Canning has lost the power and influence bequeathed to him by Ponsonby ; he followed France into the Syrian Christian intrigues and lost his way as well as the control over the Turks. Peel's speech of advice to the Emperor made no sensation here unless to be approved of, for the persecution of the Roman C. Church has created immense sympathy for Poland in Austria. They are as much pitied here for their religious sufferings as they were by us for their political sufferings ; consequently any reproach to the Emperor is approved of, especially as no danger can possibly arise from holding such language, beyond a little coldness between England and Russia. Turkey is, as you say, a tempting bait, but no country dare take the first bite, and all wait to see it crumble away ; but like the Greek Empire it will hold together long after it is rotten. If you have read Lord Londonderry's silly book you will see that he approves of what he calls Slade's plan of fortifying Constantinople, which flatters my vanity, as I put the idea into Slade's head ; it would make the Turks strong and enable them to take an independent and high tone with Russia. If the happiness of the people is indicative of good government Metternich may be said to govern this country with infinite wisdom, for I never saw a more contented people. It is sad that he is growing old, he is a strong guarantee of peace. I believe he is delighted to have got rid of your Govt., but that is not to be wondered at ; you kept him always in hot water or rather troubled waters, and he loves the

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stagnation of Peel. I believe, however, that he regrets Lord Beauvale,¹ whose quiet apprehension and aptitude for business suited him.

From Lord Palmerston

January 14, 1842.

I have shown your letter to Melbourne, and we both agree with you, Baring and Charles Wood that if Peel proposes new taxes to make up the deficiency of the revenue, we ought in consistency with our own course last year to oppose his new taxes, upon the ground that the deficiency can be made good without adding to the public burdens, but, on the contrary, by diminishing them. Melbourne thinks, however, that if Peel should propose any general and comprehensive scheme for a revision of our Fiscal System, such a proposal on his part would require fresh consideration by us. I agree with you that it is unlikely that Peel should propose an Income Tax. Such a tax, with all its necessarily concomitant powers of inquisition, would be so distasteful to all classes, except those who would not contribute to it, that nothing but the urgency of war, and the necessity of great sacrifices for great objects, would induce Parliament and the country to submit to it. I am glad to hear you are going up to a dinner. I heard some time ago that such a thing had been in contemplation before, but that the Bear had burked it. Naples is full of English, and Lichfield passes his time there in bed with the gout; 'and the best and safest way he can spend his time,' says Melbourne, 'for while there he is not posting on to a second ruin.' The Neapolitan Government are not likely to agree to a Commercial Treaty with us. The farmer of their revenue, M. Dupont, a Frenchman, says he would give them twice as much for their Custom Duties, if they would lower their tariff, but

¹ Lord Beauvale, younger brother of Melbourne, was British Ambassador at Vienna.

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they say they prefer keeping things as they are. It is curious, if true as the *Chronicle* says, that Aberdeen has sided with France in her etiquette quarrel with Spain. I take the fact to be that the present Government will protect Spain as a country against any territorial invasion by France, but would be glad to join the French Government in upsetting the Exaltado Party in Spain and in placing the Moderados in power; foolishly shutting their eyes to the fact that the Exaltados are the English and the Moderados the French Party. Melbourne is going to Woburn, so that you may there settle all matters with him. I own that I agree with Ashley about his Ten Hour Bill as far as children under a certain age are concerned. They are not free agents and seem entitled to protection against the combined cupidity of parents and masters.

From Princess Lieven

Paris: January 19, 1842.

Dear Lord John, Vous m'écrivez rarement, mais quand vous le faites, vous m'écrivez des lettres qui me plaisent beaucoup. Elles sont pleines de bon jugement sur toutes choses, de modération, d'équité. Votre esprit est de la bonne espèce; je l'ai toujours pensé et je le trouve tous les jours davantage. Voilà une petite préface qui s'est trouvée je ne sais comment au bout de ma plume. Vous voyez que la situation du Cabinet français est bonne. Il a montré de la force, de la volonté, de la suite. Ce qui vous a semblé un peu hardi de sa part, le procès à la presse, a eu ici un excellent effet. Il a intimidé les journaux conspirateurs. Tout le monde le veut gouverné d'une main plus ferme, cela donne courage, et très bonne mine au gouvernement. A moins d'incidens et d'accidens, je crois que la session sera très favorable au Ministère, et qu'il fera les élections comme il l'entend. Mais tout est mobile ici, il ne faut se tenir sûr de rien. L'affaire d'Espagne va occuper une séance au moins; on n'a pas le sens commun à Madrid; on n'y veut pas

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distinguer entre *l'autorité* et la *dignité*. Celle-ci est toute à la jeune reine, l'autre toute au régent, et la manière dont l'entend la France est la manière de toutes les cours et de tous les tems. Vous le soutenez comme tous les autres. On ne fera pas la guerre à l'Espagne pour cela. L'arrivée du roi de Prusse vous fera un évènement ; c'est d'une politique très galante.

To Lord Lansdowne

March 11, 1842.

The resolution to oppose the second reading of Peel's Corn Bill was taken as the best course in which all could join. We thereby protest against this miserable bill as any good or permanent settlement of the Corn question. It is quite another matter in the House of Lords. If I were in that House, I should be disposed to vote for the second reading, as any Bill of the kind must come from the House of Commons, and the present Bill makes some little improvement on the existing system, leaving the trade, however, still a gambling trade. But I should say that I preferred a fixed duty, and expected the present change to be only a commencement. Had we proposed our own scheme in the Commons, we should all have been fighting one another.

From T. B. Macaulay

[First part missing]

[1842.]

And now a word as to the very kind reproof which you have given me. In one point you are a little mistaken. Society has not seduced me from the House of Commons. I have been much more frequently occupied by my books than by either dinner parties or routs when you have missed me on the Opposition bench. To say the truth, I am convinced, after full and calm consideration, that literature is my vocation, and not politics. It was the same with Mackintosh. The fault

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of Mackintosh was that he halted between two opinions. He fell between two stools. He attended too much to politics for a man engaged in a great literary work, and too much to literature for a man who aimed at great influence in politics. Society, too, as you justly say, stole away too much of his time both from Parliament and from his study. I am six or seven years younger than he was when he first entered Parliament, and am already weaned from that ambition which was the bane of his life. The part of a political leader is not one to which I aspire. I have had longings of that sort, but they are over, and hopes and schemes of a more reasonable kind have taken their place.

Do not suppose, however, that I will flinch from your side when I am wanted. There are some questions on which I think that I can be of use, and whenever those questions are brought forward you may command me. Indeed, it is probable that I shall be more active during the remainder of the session than I have hitherto been.

To Lady Holland

August 7, 1842.

Next year, in addition to the Corn Law, we shall probably have several new questions, and the foreign policy of the present Government will, I expect, be much discussed. They seem to suppose that a want of energy and boldness in the foreign department will save us a great deal of money and some danger. I suspect they will find themselves mistaken both in the East and the West. Neither will Akbar Khan be won by our concessions and cringing.

From Lord Brougham

September 14, 1842.

Mr. Coates has been here and he has shown me the letter you wrote on our proposal, or rather our earnest request, and I might say supplication, for we all felt how

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important a service we should render to the great cause of free and sound opinions by inducing you to give the result of your reflexions, and I may add your experience, upon the constitution of this country. What you say in that letter of the *Political Philosophy* I wish I could ascribe to anything beyond your candour, and good nature, and disposition to be easily pleased with good intentions.¹ It has little merit beyond that, I fear; except that it was throughout dictated by a very anxious desire of coming at and giving the truth, and shunning all bias of any kind. But that the work when completed, if I live to complete it, will have some use, I doubt not, because it will bring the whole subject of *Political Philosophy*, both as to Governments and Economics, for the first time together, and it will contain a body of perfectly liberal but perfectly moderate doctrines and *tend* (that is all I think possible) to open men's eyes to the senseless hash on which they are fed by the daily, weekly, and quarterly caterers for depraved appetites.

But all the rest put together is of less importance in this view than the British Constitution, and therefore I do most earnestly beg of you to reconsider the matter, and to reflect on the very great and lasting service which you would render to the cause of human improvement, by undertaking that, the most essential department of all. It is quite clear nobody would do it half so well, but that is a common thing to say. I go a great deal further, for I conceive that your experience of the working of the Constitution practically is of a peculiar kind, and would throw the most important light upon many of the great points connected with the subject. I have again and again found how differently I could treat subjects in this work, in consequence of my practical habits of Government and Judicature, and how certain I should have been of falling into error had I merely known this from books. This I now find still more as

¹ Brougham's *Political Philosophy* had just appeared. The best account of Brougham is in Atlay's *Victorian Chancellors*, vol. i.

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I come nearer our own case and our own Government, namely, in treating of Aristocratical and Democratical Governments, and you will find it most of all on what I may call your own subject, our mixt Government. I therefore hope you will reconsider this matter favourably.

To Lord Lansdowne

September 22, 1842.

Ashburton has made about as bad a treaty as it was possible to make, but if it were to lead to a commercial intercourse of a more intimate kind with America, it would be worth the sacrifice.¹ As it is, I fear Baring and Co., and the land sharks of Maine will be the only gainers. I see the *M. Chronicle* is fierce on the subject. . . . I hear Auckland is in good tho' not high spirits. Ellenborough is so generally disliked for his presumption and insolence that Auckland's diffident manner and kindness of feeling will be more and more regretted. It appears as if Nicholas and L. Philippe were better friends than they used to be. I do not think Metternich would much like this. My opinion is, however, that L. Philippe will not, in his time, disturb the peace of Europe.

From Lord Palmerston

[*First part missing*]

[September, 1842.]

Then again if, as infallibly will happen, the arrangements of this Treaty² should at some future time be productive of great inconvenience and evil, it will be for our credit to have pointed out its defects at this time; and lastly, as there is obviously a general disposition on the part of the Government to sacrifice in every direction abroad the future and permanent interests of the country in order to procure relief from momentary embarrass-

¹ The Ashburton-Webster treaty, signed August 9, 1842, fixed the north-eastern frontier between the United States and Canada.

² The Ashburton-Webster treaty.

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ments, it is most desirable and necessary that they should be checked in this course by public animadversion. I have no doubt that very many people who do not understand the matter, and will not take the little trouble requisite to enable them to do so, will say that peace is so good a thing that it is worth obtaining even at the price of the sacrifices we have made ; but to those people it should be argued that they will not lose the peace, such as it is, which they have got by pointing out that better terms ought to have been insisted upon, and that by showing with a little better management on the part of our negotiator, it is highly probable that better terms might have been obtained. We ought never to have allowed the Americans, for instance, to set foot north of the St. John. They have never done so hitherto, and they never could have done so without our consent, and they can have no earthly motive for wishing to do so but a desire to secure a position which will give them in future a pull upon us. Then why did we throw Rouse's Point at their heads, even without its being asked for ? Never was there imbecility like that of Ashburton, if it was nothing worse ; the navigation of the St. John, Rouse's Point and other things which the Americans would have made great sacrifices to obtain were tossed into their lap gratuitously in the outset of the negotiation, and though Ashburton said in announcing these gifts that they were given only on condition that the boundary line should be satisfactory, the gifts were confirmed even after the settlement of a boundary line which, by Ashburton's own deliberate opinions and arguments recorded in his notes, is very unsatisfactory and objectionable. I understand the Duke of Wellington is angry at the cession of Rouse's Point, and well he may be, for if you recollect he sent you a long paper in 1840 recommending a large fortification at the head of Lake Champlain for the security of Montreal and Quebec ; a measure of precaution which will become doubly necessary now.

Auckland fears that the news from India is not so

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good as people imagine. He looks upon the advance of Nott from Candahar as an abandonment of that place ; he considers the march from thence to Cabul, without any basis of support at Candahar, as hazardous inasmuch as the troops will be placed in the midst of a hostile country, between two cities occupied by enemy's garrisons and having in their march to besiege and take a third, namely Guznee. He says the movement has been delayed much too long, and ought to have been undertaken two months sooner at least. Keane made the advance in June, Nott will have done so late in August, and if, as seems probable, they mean only to pass through Cabul and to evacuate it as soon as they have got it, the season will be so far advanced that there will not be time to negotiate any satisfactory arrangement with the Afghans before it will become necessary to march in order to get through the passes before the snow falls. The imbecility of our military Chiefs last year is described in lively colours in a letter which Auckland has shown me. As to Ellenborough, people seriously fear that his mind is not right, and that the fever he had before he left England has left permanent consequences.

*From Lord Spencer*¹

October 27, 1842.

I am satisfied that the present alarm among the farmers is groundless, as far as the Tariff or any other legislative measure goes. The great depression in the price of wheat arises from the temporary cause of the great influx of foreign wheat at the commencement of the harvest. The depression in all other farming stock arises from the distress of the manufacturing districts. It began before the tariff was thought of. My opinion about the Corn Laws remains unchanged. I do not think Agriculture will be a steady trade until they are

¹ Lord Althorp had withdrawn from official life on succeeding his father in 1834, but retained his influence in the Whig party. See Le Marchant, *Memoirs of Lord Althorp, Third Earl Spencer*.

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entirely repealed. I think you will find Peel's sliding scale work a great deal better than the last one when it gets into regular operation, but his fixed duty part of it is a great deal too high. I cannot believe in a fixed duty being maintained when prices were high, and if that should be so then it would practically work very much as the old system of a non-importation price did. For as we do not grow our own consumption of corn, the holders of foreign corn would always wait till Government was obliged to suspend the duty. This certainly proved to be the worst system of Corn Laws for all parties that ever was tried. I do not think that any system that can be devised will prevent the sort of thing happening that did happen this year. Nothing but a perfectly free trade will do this.

To Lady Holland

October 31, 1842.

I should be very much obliged for some authentic account of Melbourne. His nature is so kind, so high, so noble, so open, that it is impossible to have lived in intimacy with him without loving him. I cannot help hoping that he may yet enjoy many years of life.

*From Lord Fitzwilliam*¹

November 3, 1842.

I am very much out of sorts with our newspapers' tone about the arrangements with America, and so is Spencer; it is really very foolish to attack the Government upon the good they do as well as upon the evil, and it is still worse to endeavour to rouse an anti-American feeling in the country. This is really too bad.

From the Duke of Bedford

November 6, 1842.

Rely on it that if Palmerston attempts, or rather continues to attempt, to give a direction to the party,

¹ The third Earl; son of Pitt's Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

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and to public opinion through the newspapers, without concert, he will dissatisfy the Whig party very much. He has now got possession of the *M. Chronicle*, and some influence with the *Globe*, and is so industrious in his writings, and so offhand in all his ways, that he will disgust the best of the old Whig party. I see that it is not only on the American question, but also on the public affairs of France, that a system of irritation is kept up, after the fashion of Thiers, which we condemn here. If the *M. Chronicle* would leave the French papers alone, it would be much better, but Palmerston is not to be ruled.

From Lord Palmerston

Broadlands : November 20, 1842.

I wrote to you in a great hurry the other day and without your letters before me, and I forgot that part of it which related to Ld. Grey's resignation in consequence of differences of opinion in the Cabinet about the expediency of sending troops to Portugal.¹ If you remember what then took place was I think pretty nearly as follows. Ld. Grey proposed to the Cabinet to send 5,000 men to Portugal to put an end to the Miguellite war in that country, and the majority of the Cabinet concurred in the expediency of the measure. Some members of the Cabinet however dissented; Althorp and Brougham were among the number. I forget now who the others were. Ld. Grey then found himself in a difficulty. He had some reason to fear that if he persevered in the measure some members of the Cabinet might resign: on the other hand, he did not like to give up a measure which he thought advisable, and which the majority of the Cabinet approved of. In this embarrassment he saw no way out but by a political affair of honor with himself; and accordingly he resigned. If I mistake not he actually sent in his resignation to the King. The King wished him to remain;

¹ In 1834.

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and the whole Cabinet, headed on that occasion by Brougham, signed an address to him requesting him to withdraw his resignation ; and at last he did so. But I take it that, anticipating that to carry into execution the measure which he had proposed would break up his Government, he preferred to break the Govt. up himself ; and very handsomely volunteered to take upon his own shoulders by a direct resignation the odium and the responsibility of a break up, which if occasioned by the resignation of some of his colleagues would still in his view have been indirectly brought about by him, inasmuch as it would have arisen out of the proposal which he had made to the Cabinet. Having tendered his resignation, he considered himself in the situation of a man who has stood a shot ; and as such a person then becomes at liberty to retract anything he has said, so Ld. Grey thought that he had entitled himself to withdraw his proposal, without appearing to make the Prime Minister and the majority of the Cabinet yield to a minority.

From Lord Palmerston

April 28, 1843.

I do not know whether you have finally decided upon the course which you mean to take in regard to the Canada Corn Bill, but it seems to me that we ought wholly to overlook the strong objections which there are to the Bill, for those who proposed the fixed duty plan of 1841 ; for though this Bill admits the principle of a fixed duty, it admits that principle by a back door and in disguise, and not openly and in a straightforward manner. We proposed the fixed duty as a measure of extending the direct trade between Great Britain and the corn-growing countries of the world. The present Government proposes a fixed duty that will have the effect of forcing any increased corn importation which it may give rise to to find its way through one narrow and remote channel. The measure revived deliberately and upon full consideration the absurdity by which Baltic

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timber was sent round through Canada, and Brazilian coffee was obliged to touch at the Cape of Good Hope. We proposed a fixed duty on corn as an element of revenue. I cannot conceive anything more objectionable in principle than to impose a tax on the people of the United Kingdom and then let the produce go to a Colonial Treasury. If the Mother Country is not to tax the Colonies, why should the Colonies be permitted to tax the Mother Country? Surely if a countervailing protection is requisite for the corn grower, he has as good a claim to such Protection against the vast corn region of Canada as against any other part of the world. It is no answer to say that Canada is part of the British Empire, and that Canadian corn ought to come in as free as Irish corn. If the Canadian is willing to come into the taxation of the United Kingdom, then of course he would be entitled to come also within the sphere of the Custom House.

To Lord Lansdowne

July 19, 1843.

We had a meeting at the Reform Club yesterday, in consequence of the requisition of which I spoke to you from the Irish members—nineteen in number. The chief object was to ascertain whether it would be useful to call public meetings in England. Everyone was against this course except George Byng, who got angry thereupon. The matter ended with our requesting the Irish members to state more specifically the points on which they wished the opinion of English electors to be ascertained. So that some good may result. I agree with you that it is not advisable to endow the Roman Catholic Church with any of the spoils of the Protestant. But when a reduction is made in the Protestant Church, I am not at all clear that the saving ought to be devoted to purposes exclusively Protestant, the funds belonging, as they do, to the State. However, I am not anxious to revive the appropriation clause. Mr. Roche, a Repealer, told us

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that the payment of the Catholic clergy was a difficulty we had raised for ourselves, as the Irish did not wish for it. This may be true, but if we keep up the Protestant Church it is the only way of doing justice to the nation at large. I attach far more importance than you seem to do to the distribution of patronage. The Roman Catholics are now as effectually excluded from office as they were before the Emancipation Bill passed, and more invidiously. Under our Government every Roman Catholic priest that chose to apply to the Treasury, every R.C. lawyer that sought an appointment from the Secretaries of State, had as good a chance of promotion for his relations or himself as a Protestant. *La Charte était une vérité.* Seeing that Peel has not chosen to act boldly on the same principle, I do not see how he is to govern Ireland. He can only wait for bloodshed, and make necessity his devilish plea for tyranny.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 9, 1843.

Supposing the Irish Church to be reformed in such a manner as to have salary when there is service, and none where there is none needed, the question remains, will there be a surplus, and if so, what should be done with it? The result of my reflexions is that such a question had better be left in abeyance. Any appropriation of the money would raise again all that prejudice against which we struggled so long, and the satisfaction we then sought would not be gained by a partial appropriation of Church revenues to other purposes. Peel and the good government of Ireland appear to be a contradiction in terms. We shall see what he proposes.

From Lord Palmerston

October 22, 1843.

Your prophecy about the prosecution of O'Connell was realised before your letter reached me. These

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measures are, as you say, the beginning of a fight, but it must be owned that O'Connell has had a flooring in the first round. He may, however, recover ; but his sinking down at once from an Irish Parliament to a large Quarter Session Meeting in College Green for merely local and domestic purposes does not show much game. It may indeed be a question whether he does not in his heart feel that the Government have rescued him from great embarrassment. What do you think of the grounds upon which the prosecution rests ? Will the things which he is charged with saying and doing amount, if proved, to the offence for which he is prosecuted ? I cannot forgive him his wicked endeavours to get up hatred of peace between the Irish and the Saxon, as he calls us ; and shall not be sorry if the Prosecution succeeds. To be sure, as was well put the other day in the Orange Petition to Lord Grey, O'Connell's doctrine would lead, not to a Parliament for the whole of Ireland, but to one for the Catholic and another for the Protestant part of the nation. . . . It cannot be denied that the vigour which the Government have shown recently in Ireland will rally their party round them again, but if that shall enable and embolden them to propose conciliatory measures next session, the country will have no reason to regret it. As to placing the Catholic and Protestant Church upon an equality, that requires the co-operation of the Catholics. Will they give to the Legislature and to the Crown the same control over their Establishment which exists over the Protestant Establishment ? If not, the equality would, to use the jargon of the day, be one-sided. I have no doubt, however, that there is much truth in the Letters of Philalethes, alias Trevylian, and that the Priests have been the great movers in this recent storm of Repeal agitation. The movement was indeed begun by O'Connell for pecuniary and political purposes ; but the Priests who within the last two years have been threatened by the people with a reduced tariff of fees and contributions thought that the cry of Repeal might be

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useful to them, and that whether successful or not it would give them some better provision. I am all for giving them such a provision, but not for making the Catholic Religion either the dominant one or an equally established one. Putting all doctrinal questions aside, I look on the Catholic Religion as a bad political institution, unfavourable to morals, to industry, and to liberty. I see Smith O'Brien is said to have declared himself a Repealer. These Irish members from the south are obliged to yield to the feelings of their constituents, and such conversions therefore mean just nothing at all, but that the converts wish to keep their seats.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 31, 1843.

I wrote to Pigot some time ago indicating my opinion that we ought to be prepared at the meeting of Parliament to state the course we should advise to meet the perils which hang over Ireland. You will see by his answer the nature of the remedies to which I adverted. I stated particularly that with regard to Parliamentary and municipal franchise our former measures would give an outline of the bills which would be necessary to give Ireland equal rights with England. Pigot's letter is so important that I wish you to read it carefully, and forward it to Palmerston, desiring him to send it to the Duke of Bedford. I am sorry to say his account contains much more ground for apprehension than suggestion of a plain path to former rest and safety. In fact, the security and confidence which it took us some years to establish has been completely overthrown in a few months. *L'homme est de feu pour le mensonge, il est de glace pour la vérité.* Whatever the peril may be, however, I shall not think to have done my duty unless I contribute when Parliament meets the best advice I can give to set things right. The concessions must be large, and must be undertaken in a friendly and not a grudging spirit.

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To Lord Lansdowne

November 11, 1843.

I do not know that it much signifies whether an Address to the Queen praying for a meeting of Parliament is presented or not by a few Peers, but I cannot agree with you that the time is improper. It is clear, I think, that tranquillity and contentment cannot be produced by the present prosecutions, whichever way they may end. Nor would either House of Parliament interfere with the trials. Then you ask what measures Parliament should be called upon to adopt? There is one very simple one, which if adopted would, I think, be very effectual. It is to address the Crown to act in the spirit of the resolutions on which the Union was founded and the Act of 1829. By the former of these equality of rights was promised, by the latter it was pretended to be carried into effect. Yet never have the Irish enjoyed what was so solemnly held forth to them as an equivalent for agreeing to the Union. Up to 1829 the Tory party were engaged in preventing the Catholics from having by law the rights of British subjects. From 1835 to 1843 they have been employed in defeating the law which professed to give them those rights. No Catholic is admitted to any office of importance, unless Mr. Howley, whose appointment was the consequence of agitation, may be held an exception. If Stanley's bill had passed few Catholics would have had the right of voting, and scarcely any have been allowed to sit in the House of Commons. I should say, therefore, that the first and most obvious measure to be adopted is to act in good faith, to relinquish that course of fraud by which injustice has been covered over by a pretended and false profession of liberality, in short to give the Irish now what Mr. Pitt promised them in 1800. This, at all events, is the only line I can take; I feel sure of its justice, and very confident of its success if adopted. The poor instalments we gave from 1835 to 1841 show

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how ready the Irish are to be satisfied with kind and impartial treatment. The great object is to prevent the establishment of a settled hatred between the two nations, which Lyndhurst and O'Connell have striven so hard to create. This commission to enquire into the conduct of Landlords is a curious affair, especially on the part of a man who so gravely censured Drummond for saying, 'Property has its duties as well as its rights.'

To Lord Lansdowne

November 18, 1843.

I have letters from Pigot and others respecting the prosecutions. Everyone seems to regret them. It is doubtful whether the winter will pass without serious outrage, and the priests are said to have gone heartily into the repeal movement. You will have seen the resolution of the R.C. Bishops. Every month of Peel's government makes it more difficult to restore that sweet sleep in which Irish agitation slumbered from 1835 to 1842.

From Lord Clarendon

January 25, 1844.

I enclose a letter from Melbourne and have given you in pencil the benefit of my partial decipher—a long and laborious operation. I had sent him Senior's letter and merely remarked that I thought O'Connell's proposals moderate. So I do still, considering how often he has publicly declared that no concession by England short of repeal should satisfy him, and I wonder how he could commit himself in writing to proposals which his followers would look upon as very far short of repealing the Union. I do not say, however, nor did I mean to convey to Melbourne that I thought O'C.'s seven requirements were practical; but upon every one of them, with the exception perhaps of the Absentee Tax, something might and ought to be done. Abating part of the Protestant Church difficulty, bettering the condition of

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the Catholic clergy, altering the relations between Landlords and Tenants, extending the Franchise and improving the Municipal Institutions, are all desirable. The Irish have a right at least to have them taken into consideration. O'Connell asks too much and in a disagreeable manner, but I am not disposed to blame him greatly for that, as it is only through intimidation and exaggerated demands that justice by dribblets has ever been extracted from England. He, of course, knows that his proposals in their present form could not be listened to, for he says he is ready to lend his hearty co-operation in any other scheme that may be suggested, and I am sure that if you were in power, notwithstanding his stupid, ungrateful accusation, you would soon bring him to terms and by doing what was strictly just quash the cry for Repeal.

From Lord Palmerston

March 5, 1844.

You may like to see this letter which I have received to-day from the Ex-M.P. and present British Consul at Philadelphia. It is not at all unlikely that the Russians have been busy in the United States; there has long been a good deal of coquetting going on between the Autocrat and the Transatlantic Republicans. What he says as to the necessity of firmness in dealing with our American cousins is quite true; there are no people, not even excepting the Irish peasantry, who look more keenly into the minds of those they have to deal with, to discover anything like wavering or infirmity of purpose, or who know better how to take advantage of it.

From Lord Fitzwilliam to the Duke of Bedford

April 1, 1844.

Disagreeable as the subject may be, I think it better not to delay writing any longer; perhaps, indeed, I ought to communicate more directly with Ld. John, but it is

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pleasanter to avoid it, and we sometimes prefer the pleasant to the right. You may perhaps say that I am making a mole hill into a mountain. I am afraid not. It is no accidental or passing question which, when once over, one need trouble one's head no more about. But here is the leader of the Whigs in the H. of Commons voting for, and of course pledging himself to, a ten-hour clause in a factory bill. Supposing—and perhaps it is still possible—that question had led, as it seemed very near doing, to the upsetting of the present ministers, could the govt. of the country have been entrusted to a party who came in upon the principle of limiting the hours of labour? It won't do to say that the clause only applied to women and children—the principle is the same, and in factories (tho' perhaps not in some other labours) the real practical effect would be to limit them for men. No government could be formed upon this principle—or, if there could, I would do my very best to get rid of it as soon as possible. But my belief is that no such could be formed. But if no govt. could be formed, or exist, upon such a principle, no opposition—no leader of a party in opposition—has any right to lend his own, and his party's, weight to the principle in question. If he is bent (on some private feeling) upon voting he ought not to speak, or (still better) to speak with the fullest possible disclaimer of desire to carry his party with him. This, I fear, was not done, but rather the contrary, and arguments used which were calculated to carry the great body of the party in the leader's wake. How the retreat is to be made I know not. It is to be hoped that Ministers will be strong enough to defeat Ld. Ashley, but they will be still liable to a repetition of the attack whenever it so pleases Lord A. or Mr. Oastler, or any other philanthropist, who may be either misled by genuine feeling, or be urged by his ambition to make use of this question as a means of acquiring influence over the misguided masses whom he misleads—and then—what is to happen? are we to have the same course taken? and yet how can

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another be taken with credit? It is a disagreeable subject, but I have now brought it to the point where I think I must leave it to your own contemplation and consideration.

To Mr. Parker

April 4, 1844.

I am always glad to receive letters containing your bold and sagacious view of affairs, even when I differ most from you. In your view of Anti-Corn Law agitation I very much agree. Looking at the list of subscriptions and the names of the most active leaders, men will be apt to consider it as a move of the great manufacturers to increase their profits at the expense of the great landowners, who clutch their rents with a firm hand. Still there is a principle involved, and a true principle. Some concession to that principle ought to be made—I doubt whether any will be made. My view is that we ought to look forward to a total abolition as desirable, but only to be effected when all the county rate, and half the malt tax can be taken off, so that no possible pledge can be given on that subject. Fresh difficulties are rising on every side. What course they may render necessary I know not. But the best thing that can happen for the present is to have a member like Sir R. Peel, who will keep his sails furled and wait the squall, ready to run before the wind if nothing better can be done.

To the Duke of Leinster

September, 1844.

The Union is a fundamental part of our political system. No man abhors more than I do the breach of faith which has been committed in defrauding Ireland of the fair participation of equal rights. But while I am ready to sacrifice any chance of popularity or power to obtain for the Irish that fair participation, I am determined that so far as I am concerned I will stand by the

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Legislative Union. To act otherwise, to let it be supposed that we favoured a Federal Union when we mean no such thing, to gather strength by false pretences, to seem to approve the agitation for Repeal when we have no intention of promoting the objects of Repealers, would be to act the low and unworthy part which the present Ministry have played on the question of Free Trade. I trust you will make this intelligible to the Whig party in Ireland.

From Lord Campbell

September 17, 1844.

I wish much that you would stir up some of your old colleagues in the House of Lords to defend the late government and the present conduct of the Whig party against Brougham. It is not at all fitting or expedient that this task should fall upon me single-handed.¹ What have I to say to the argument which he has several times used? 'I have accused them to their face of having deserted their principles. I have alleged this as the reason why I have been obliged to leave them. They have remained silent. They have not once uttered any complaint against me. They feel that I am justified.' There is great plausibility in this, and he may say with some appearance of truth, 'Habeo confitentes reos.' Now surely on such occasions, if Lord Melbourne's state of health precludes him from prudently entering into such a debate, Lord Lansdowne or Lord Clarendon or Lord Cottenham might be expected to brave his vituperations and to vindicate themselves and their friends. My sole resistance when repeated has the appearance of a personal altercation, and things perhaps had better return to the state in which they were when he was allowed to assert for law, fact or reason, whatever suited his purpose.

¹ Campbell had been Attorney-General in Melbourne's Ministry.

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From Lord Palmerston

December 20, 1844.

I return you Minto's letter, which is written with that strong sense and vigour of understanding which so remarkably belong to him. As to Howick and his ultra Free Trade Doctrines, you are, of course, aware that in the beginning of last session he was inspired by others, or formed for himself a little plan of setting up business upon his own account as leader of a small party, Charles Buller and Hawes being his two Generals of Division. Charles Buller indeed said to a friend of mine at that time that Howick was the God of his idolatry. I think indeed that before the end of the session, one saw plain indications that the idolatrous zeal of Buller and Hawes had somewhat abated and that they had discovered, what other people knew long ago, that Howick with all his talent, which nobody can deny him, is entirely deficient in some qualities indispensable for a leader of a party, however select, and that he possesses some peculiarities which tend to disqualify him for such a position. But Howick has probably not shared in the discovery made by his friends, and is still harping on the topics which he was told would bring him followers from among the Liberal party ; and, of course, Free Trade in all its latitude is one of these.

The topic you mean to take up as to the condition of the labouring classes is a very important one, and one that would be very suitable for a leader of opposition. Extension of commerce would no doubt be the foundation of improvement in that condition. I have never been as sanguine and keen about emigration as many other people who have perhaps understood the subject better. No one can doubt that every facility should be given for spontaneous emigration ; but if public money is to be applied to the removal of part of our people, one is tempted to inquire whether the same sum might not provide an equal number of persons with employment

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at home ; and as Capital and Population are the foundation of the strength and power of Nations, one would rather if it were possible lay out our money in improvements at home and keep our people at home, than spend our money in the comparatively unproductive process of dispeopling the country.

From Lord Howick

January, 1845.

At the end of last session you called the attention of the House to the condition of the working classes, intimating that in the next you might probably move for a Committee on the subject. I hope you adhere to your intention of bringing this subject in some shape or other before the House ; it is one of the highest importance, and it is one for the discussion of which many symptoms prove the public mind to be prepared so as to give grounds for hoping that real practical good might result from bringing it forward.

It is my firm conviction that there are measures within the power of Parliament, the adoption of which would in no long time work a vast improvement in the condition of the labouring classes ; of these the first and the foundation of every other ought, in my opinion, to be the sweeping away of all restrictions upon the freedom of trade, except those duties which we impose simply and exclusively with a view to revenue. I know that hitherto you have not been prepared to go this length, but I do think that if you will carefully consider the condition of the country you will see that the time is come when we ought to attack the whole system of protecting duties boldly and upon principle.

The crying evil of our present state of society is the deficiency of employment and the consequently low value of labour, more particularly in the southern counties ; but the more carefully I consider the existing state of things the more complete appears to me the evidence

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that this evil is mainly occasioned by restrictions upon trade, and that as it is almost entirely the result of artificial causes, by the removal of these causes it would in time be corrected.

If I am right in my opinion as to the practicability of giving in this way great if not complete relief to the industrious classes, it will follow that the means of effecting this great good ought to be distinctly pointed out and pressed with the utmost earnestness upon the consideration of Parliament, and this the more especially because there are many persons (among them Ashley and his friends) who are as sincerely anxious for the accomplishment of the object we have in view as ourselves, while they are seeking to effect it by measures some of them altogether inadequate and others useless or worse than useless.

It is, I know, considered (and as I think very justly) that for those in opposition it is generally unwise to propose specific measures, but it seems to me that there is a medium between doing this and taking the shabby course followed by Peel in refusing to give any explanation even of the general nature of the measures in his opinion required by the public interest until he should have the responsibility of preparing them as a Minister.

With this view it strikes me that it would not be a bad mode of bringing forward the subject to move for a Committee of the whole House on the condition of the working classes, having previously given notice of and printed the resolution which, in the event of the House agreeing to go into Committee, you would move. By taking this course you would distinctly bring under discussion the measures you meant to recommend for the existing evil while at the same time those remedies need not be proposed in the form of matured measures, and you would compel the Government either to agree to going into Committee, thereby admitting your position of the necessity of doing something and subjecting themselves to the obligation of bringing forward a counter-

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project, or else to take the division upon a question most disadvantageous to them.

To Lord Lansdowne

January 5, 1845.

The mutilated provision for the Catholic clergy is encompassed with all kinds of perils. Two conditions seem to me indispensable. (1) That it should be charged in Ireland as the Episcopal and Presbyterian establishments are charged in England and Scotland. (2) That the Roman Catholic Bishops should be appointed without any interference by the State. The want of the first of these conditions would anger the people of Great Britain: the want of the second would move the opposition of the people of Ireland. There is likewise a preliminary article which is indispensable, viz. that the civil grievances of the people of Ireland should be first considered, and as far as possible redressed. Such are my fixed opinions on this subject. I lament with you the agitation against the Catholic primates. The joy, which you say is expressed about the present division, arises from that ill-dissembled hatred of Ireland to which Lyndhurst and Stanley appealed with so much success in the days of their opposition, and which now hangs on them with such just retribution. It is very well to kick down the ladder, but a man often hurts his own foot in the operation.

From Lord Palmerston

January 9, 1845.

You are quite right not to move an amendment. There is not much use in moving one, unless with the intention of dividing, and in the present state of parties and affairs there does not seem to be any advantage likely to arise to us from a division on the first day of the session; it would only rally round the Government some supporters who are more disposed to keep aloof from them.

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This notion of an understanding with the Pope and a payment to the Irish Priests, though probably without much foundation, has made some of the Government supporters very angry ; but not enough to induce them to vote with us upon an amendment.

Guizot seems to have weathered his storm, or rather Louis Philippe appears satisfied with having given his Minister a shake to remind him that he stands upon royal favour and not upon his own strength ; and he will perhaps allow Guizot to go on for another session. But the proofs which from time to time we have of the precarious tenure by which French Ministers hold their offices show how foolish it is for our Government to be making permanent sacrifices of national interests to give temporary duration to a French Ministry who hold their posts at the will and pleasure of the King of the French. The sacrifices remain, and the Minister for whom they are made passes away. I remember hearing last year about this French swindling transaction in the River Gaboon ; Ebrington asked a question about it, and I forget what answer he received, but I think it was one of those supercilious shuffles with which Peel sometimes tries to get out of a difficulty. But the statement is probably true, and we shall very likely lose some valuable trade in that quarter. The French papers say that we are going to give up our right of Gum Trading at Portendic, to which we are entitled by Treaty, in exchange for the settlement at Albreda in the Gambia, which the French have gone on holding in violation of Treaty. This is a Heads I lose, Tails you win, diplomacy. As to the mutual right of search under the Treaties of 1831-33, if Peel gives that up out of complaisance to Guizot and Louis Philippe, such a surrender will be a beautiful commentary upon that affected horror of Slave Trade which has prevented him from admitting Brazilian sugar, and has led to the loss of our considerable trade with Brazil.

I hear from a neighbour who has lately been at Portsmouth that the Government are going seriously to

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work to place the dockyard there in a state of defence, which at present it is not in. During our recent discussions with France about Tahiti there were ten large steamers at Cherbourg capable of carrying a thousand men each, and if the negotiation had ended in a quarrel there was nothing at Portsmouth to prevent these ten steamers from making a dash at the harbour and burning the dockyards, stores and ships in ordinary, without any danger to the French Commander of being hung in chains like Jack the Painter. We had no Line of Battle ship at Spithead and hardly a gun mounted upon the very insufficient batteries which look at you, but do not command the entrance ; and as to troops, I suppose we cannot have more than three battalions in the place. The necessity of placing the works in a better state of defence was, I am told, pointed out to the Government during the discussion, but they declined to do so, alleging that it would '*complicate* the negotiation' ! You will have no difficulty in finding good materials for the contrast you mean to draw between professions and performances.

Peel, I hear, wants to persuade Ripon to retire, but Ripon demurs. Stanley complains of the number of cripples in the Cabinet and wants some new hands to be brought in.

It seems to me that Daniel is somewhat on the decline, and neither Smith O'Brien nor MacHale can take his place. The Repeal fever will, upon the principle of counter-irritation, be much abated by the railway mania ; still there will remain ample discontent to afford grounds for a change of policy on the part of the Government towards Ireland. I take it that some of the zealous Protestants here will say that, if driven to chose between comparative evils, they would rather abolish the Protestant Church in Ireland and place all sects there upon the voluntary principle, than endow and as it were establish a Roman Catholic Church. If so we shall have Inglis and Howick and Daniel all voting

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with Ward for the simple abolition of the Protestant
Establishment.

To Lord Lansdowne

November 17, 1845.

Lady Holland's last state does not seem to admit of hope. The many years that she has shown the greatest kindness and affection to me makes this a bitter affliction. Her last illness appears to have been very short and not attended with much pain. I see it is announced that Parliament is to meet early in January. The disease in the potatoes seems to have made progress, and will, I fear, tell with fearful force in the spring. I think the corn laws must be entirely given up. A fixed duty a few months ago would have mitigated the present evil.

CHAPTER IV

THE CORN LAWS

OPINION had been moving steadily towards Free Trade. In 1844 Lord Spencer publicly announced his conviction that Protection was unnecessary, and a few other influential Whigs followed his example. In 1845 the failure both of the harvest and of the potato crop over large parts of England and Scotland, and throughout almost the whole of Ireland, converted multitudes whom arguments of the Anti-Corn Law League had failed to reach. 'Famine itself, against which we had warred,' declared Bright in an arresting phrase, 'joined us.' The conclusion that the Corn Laws must go was reached simultaneously and independently by Lord John Russell and Peel; and the conversion of the former was announced in a ringing manifesto from Edinburgh in the form of a letter to his constituents, dated November 22. 'Let us unite to put an end to a system which has proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people.' The letter, which was disapproved by none of the Whig leaders except Melbourne, sounded the death-knell of the Corn Laws. Peel failed to carry his Cabinet, and resigned on December 6.

On December 8 a summons from the Queen reached Edinburgh, and Lord John hurried to Osborne, where he was invited to form a Government.¹ After consulting

¹ The recently published *Correspondence of Charles Greville and Henry Reeve*, 1924, throws fresh light on the crisis. See pp. 15-19.

CORRESPONDENCE OF LORD JOHN RUSSELL

his friends, he replied that he would only accept if Peel was unable to carry on and if the Protectionists could not form a Government. When Peel declared both these courses impracticable and promised his co-operation in dealing with the Corn Laws, Lord John called his friends together on December 15, when, by a majority of nine to five, it was agreed to form a Ministry. He proceeded to draw up his list ; but at the eleventh hour Lord Grey, who had recently succeeded his father in the title, refused to join a Cabinet with Palmerston at the Foreign Office, and Palmerston declined to accept any other post.¹ Lord John, on reflection, felt unable to form a Ministry without Grey, and informed the Queen that he would support Peel in dealing with the Corn Laws. The Whig leader received congratulations from many of his friends on his release from an onerous task, for it was clear that Peel's reconstructed Cabinet would have a short life. 'Power may come some day or other,' he wrote to his wife, 'in a less odious form.' When the crisis was over he drew up a detailed account of the events of a crowded fortnight. Peel reconstituted his Cabinet without Stanley, the unbending champion of Protection, and proceeded with the help of the Whigs to carry the abolition of the Corn Laws within three years, with a sliding scale during the interval. He bore with unruffled dignity the reproach of the Protectionist Tories that he had ruined the agricultural interest and betrayed his followers.

On June 25, 1846, the day on which the Corn Bill passed its third reading in the House of Lords, Lord John joined the Protectionists in refusing Peel's demand for additional powers for the Irish executive. The

¹ The correspondence of Lord John and Earl Grey on this occasion is printed in the *English Historical Review*, vol. i. 115-27.

THE CORN LAWS

Ministry resigned without regret, and the Whig leader speedily formed his first administration, magnanimously forgetting his vow never again to act with Grey, while Grey for his part withdrew his veto on Palmerston's return to the Foreign Office. An invitation to three of Peel's junior colleagues, Sidney Herbert, Lord Dalhousie, and Lord Lincoln (soon to become the fourth Duke of Newcastle), was declined. There was, however, plenty of good material in the Whig ranks, even though Melbourne's declining health rendered his co-operation impossible. Lord Grey accepted the Colonial Office, Charles Wood became Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Grey began his long association with the Home Office, Sir John Hobhouse returned to the Board of Control, Lord Clarendon became President of the Board of Trade, Lord Auckland First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Lansdowne President of the Council, Lord Minto Privy Seal, Lord Cottenham Lord Chancellor, Lord Campbell Chancellor of the Duchy, Lord Morpeth Commissioner of Works, Lord Clanricarde Postmaster-General, Macaulay Paymaster of the Forces, Lord Bessborough Viceroy of Ireland, Labouchere Chief Secretary. Clarendon pleaded for the offer of a seat in the Cabinet to Cobden, and the Prime Minister expressed a hope that the Free Trade leader would join the Government after the foreign tour which his health rendered necessary; but Cobden replied that he had not the slightest desire for office.

From Lord Grey

November 8, 1845.

I consider the time for a fixed duty quite gone by, and I am very glad you say you do not think you will ever propose it again yourself. I hope you will go farther and resist it if proposed by Peel; this is what

CORRESPONDENCE OF LORD JOHN RUSSELL

I contemplate doing. I read with great pleasure your speech to the Edinburgh people.

*From Sir Denis Le Marchant*¹

November 29, 1845.

By this time you have probably heard a good deal of the effect of your letter. The Ultras on one side throw up their caps, very generally, except a few who said that there was still much to be done (by *themselves*) before the victory was won. The more moderate approve, though with some caution, fearing, as those connected with agriculture do, the renewed opposition of the farmers. It would be difficult yet to speak with any certainty of the movement likely to be produced in the Constituencies, or rather how far any elections might be influenced by it. One thing, however, is quite certain, viz. the dismay into which it has cast the Tory party, and the extreme confusion of the Government.

*From H. G. Ward*²

November 29, 1845.

I cannot leave Town without thanking you for making us a *Party* again, which we certainly have not been for the last four years, and never could have been, while you differed with so many of your old followers upon what we all felt to be the vital question of the day. We shall now act with you again frankly and heartily as we did upon the Reform Bill and in 1835. I care not whether the struggle be short or long. Peel has lost *his* great opportunity; you have seized it and made it your own. Henceforward the line is clearly drawn. There is nothing to prevent united action; and, with a great object to contend for, all minor differences will disappear.

¹ Secretary to the Board of Trade, 1836-1841; later Chief Clerk to the House of Commons; biographer of Lord Althorp.

² M.P. for Sheffield; an advanced Liberal; afterwards High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, etc.

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From Sir John Shelley to the Duke of Bedford

November 30, 1845.

Seldom, or ever, in my life have I been so delighted as at Lord John's manly, statesmanlike, and well-timed letter. If, instead of being the brightest ornament of the Senate, and the man to whom the Country may point as that most rare of all beings, a truly honest politician, he had been a member of the prize ring, he could not have known better how and where to apply his knockdown blow. Tottering and undecided, Peel wanted but this letter of Lord John to settle his business, and to make it next to impossible for him to come to time. He *dare* not repeal the Corn Laws, and he is not rash enough to face the impending scarcity of provisions. Will he have the manliness to resign, or will he not catch at every straw to prevent his being drowned? However, let him pursue what course he may, the days of the Corn Law are numbered, and that clog on good farming, *protection*, will soon be a matter of history.

*From Lord Cottenham*¹

December 2, 1845.

I cannot refrain from expressing to you the pleasure I felt in reading your admirable letter to your Constituents. I rejoiced in the opinion it expressed, and in the most happy opportunity you had taken of publishing it; neither too soon nor too late, but just at the moment most destructive of the proposals of the one party, and most wanted by the other, and best calculated to forward the course you think ought to be pursued.

*From Lord Morpeth*²

December 4, 1845.

I liked your letter extremely, and it was certainly a relief to me to see it, as I feared my own unauthorised

¹ Lord Chancellor, 1836-1841 and 1846-1850. See Atlay, *The Victorian Chancellors*, i., chaps. xvii. and xviii.

² Chief Secretary for Ireland under Melbourne. Succeeded his father in 1848 as seventh Earl of Carlisle. See Harriet Martineau, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 131-142.

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rush into print might not have been quite approved of by you. I had felt compunction at not taking counsel from you beforehand, but I was restrained by the fear that you might still seek to impose some lingering fixed-duty fetters upon me, and I was determined to be quit of them. The coincidence of our appearances was rather remarkable, and I, who continue to be a believer in mesmerism, can only surmise that some magnetic influence must have been at work.

From Lord Fortescue

December 4, 1845.

I know not what our minds generally, and particularly those of the rustic class like myself, think of your Address, but as a member of the party which looks to you as its leader I return you my cordial thanks for so well-timed and well-written a Manifesto. My own feelings would have been still in favour of a low and perhaps annually decreasing duty, but I dare say you have judged rightly that the time for such compromise is gone by, and that those who hold to the principles of free trade ought to carry them out to the full in the article of corn, and I am quite ready to take my stand with you on that ground.

From Lord Grey

Howick : December 6, 1845.

I have just got your letter. Since writing it you must have heard the extraordinary news (of which I suppose there can be no doubt) that we are to have the abolition of the Corn Laws from the same men and under much the same circumstances as the repeal of the Catholic disabilities. I own I was not prepared for this. I thought it impossible in the actual state of the country the corn law could be maintained, but I thought for decency's sake Peel would not, *as minister*, have proposed the change. However, I rejoice beyond measure that he does. The prospect of the dissolution of the Govt.

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upon this question frightened me very much, and I am far from wishing to see an attempt at a liberal government till there is a prospect of its being able really to maintain itself.

To Lord Lansdowne

December 11, 1845.

The Queen has desired me to undertake the formation of a government. Whether I shall do so or not depends upon you. I hope you will come to town to-morrow. The Queen wishes you to go with me to Windsor Castle on Saturday.

From Sir James Graham ¹

December 12, 1845.

With reference to our conversation of this evening, the purport of Sir Robert Peel's communication to me is this. He thinks it would be embarrassing were he to suggest the details of any measure for the adjustment of the great question which presses for a settlement. He was prepared, some time before your letter of the 22nd of November had appeared, to advise measures which in their general outline did not materially vary from those which that letter suggested. He would have thought it good policy to conciliate acquiescence in the certain attainment of the main object, at no remote period, by very liberal dealing as to pecuniary burdens, and at the same time to prevent alarm and the risk of disturbance by such provisions as caution and forbearance might suggest. In the present state of public affairs and with Sir Robert Peel's views as to the importance of a settlement of this question, he would be little disposed to make captious objections to the details of measures conceived in the spirit to which I have above referred, or to enter into party combinations for their defeat or obstruction. For my own part, I do not hesitate to state my concurrence

¹ Since leaving the Whigs in 1834, Graham had been Peel's right-hand man. See C. S. Parker's *Life of Sir J. Graham*.

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in the policy on which Sir Robert Peel was prepared to act, and my readiness to support it.

From Lord Melbourne

December 13, 1845.

Many thanks for your letter. I am much rejoiced that you have got Lansdowne with you. I hope you don't mistake me and my message. The sole cause of it was that I am unwilling to take upon myself the responsibility of a total and immediate repeal of the duties upon the importation of foreign corn, and I doubted whether after your letter you would not and must not think it your duty to propose it. My principal objection to that letter was that it proceeded altogether upon an erroneous foundation. The destruction of the potatoes is much exaggerated, and I am more and more persuaded every day that the notion of a dearth of corn is entirely false and unfounded. Remember this in whatever you determine. If you form a Government, I shall, of course, be inclined to support it. If Peel had proposed the repeal of the Corn Law I should only have pointed out the inconsistency, and in him the dishonesty, of such conduct. If you propose it I shall content myself with stating the reasons why I think the measure doubtful, particularly at this moment.

From Edward Ellice

Howick : December 13, 1845.

Howick¹ and I go up to you by the mail train tomorrow, and will be in Chesham Place before two o'clock on Monday. How you are to get through this job, with the reluctance and apathy that may hold back those whose assistance would be of the most importance to you, and those pretensions which arrangements of former times may bring upon you from others, not of equal weight or efficiency, it is not easy to foresee; but if any

¹ Ellice still speaks of the new Earl Grey under his old title.

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man could do it, you will. Howick is right enough in essentials—will be difficult about some arrangements at the Foreign Office, and looks to either the Home or Colonial Office, if an administration is formed.

*From Lord Minto*¹

Minto : December 14, 1845.

By sending to Howick I got your letter of the 11th from Osborne House last night, and after full consideration have made up my mind to undertake the Admiralty again as you propose to me. I do not think it will endure long enough to produce any serious wear and tear of health and constitution, and I feel a desire to be at your side and aiding in your bold undertaking.

From the Duke of Bedford

December 14, 1845.

A night's reflection has satisfied me that I could do no good by accepting a seat in the Cabinet. Any service I may be able to render to you and your Government may be given equally by standing aloof from office of all kind. I am not sure that this is a right decision, but I am, at this moment, depressed and gloomy at the prospect before us, and at the anxious duties that have so unexpectedly fallen upon you. However, you have qualities to bear them, and will no doubt take a calm and philosophical view of your position, satisfied that by doing your best you will have fulfilled your duty to the satisfaction of your own conscience. If you fail to carry the measure through the present House of Commons, you will probably have to give way to those who incur the responsibility of opposing it. If, on the other hand, you get through with it, you may not find the difficulties that are expected in the House of Lords, where the Peers may be unwilling to incur the risk of rejecting a measure

¹ The second Earl ; First Lord of the Admiralty under Melbourne ; father of Lord John's second wife.

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to give more and cheaper bread to our increasing population, which has the support of the Crown, the House of Commons, and the people.

From the Prince Consort

December 15, 1845.

My dear Lord John,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day. We have just heard from Sir Robert Peel, who states in answer to a question put to him by the Queen: that he feels himself to be fully justified in informing the Queen, that no one of his colleagues, who differed from him on the subjects, which have been under the recent consideration of the Cabinet, is prepared to undertake the formation of a Government.

Ever yours truly,
ALBERT.

*From Henry Reeve*¹

Paris: December 15, 1845.

M. Guizot was expecting my arrival, and had sent a messenger to bring me to him the instant I alighted from the diligence. I related to him in full detail all that had passed. When I came to the notion which had been entertained, though but for a moment, of inducing Palmerston to take the Admiralty or the Colonies, he laughed outright, and said he knew the man and the party too well to believe for an instant that he would have anything but the Foreign Office. 'But,' said he, 'I am perfectly convinced that Lord P. will return to office desirous of maintaining good relations with France and with me. Oddly enough, I am constantly fighting P.'s battles here, especially with the King. The name of Palmerston sent down the funds more than a franc on Saturday morning; but the public are more alarmed than I am.

¹ See Laughton, *Memoirs and Correspondence of Henry Reeve*. Reeve was leader-writer on foreign affairs for *The Times*, 1840–1855, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, and Registrar of the Privy Council.

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Lord P. has two great defects. Narrowness of views and entraînement de caractère. Il faut mesurer la taille de toutes les questions tous les matins, to prevent the minor ones from injuring the greater ones and to preserve the harmony of the whole. That is the principle of the entente cordiale. Lord Aberdeen and I cannot only agree but we can differ. He has submitted to our superior influence in Greece and Spain. I acknowledge that he has more weight than I have at Constantinople and Lisbon. Our policy is sometimes different, but that is not a reason for quarrelling. On n'est pas mari et femme, mais ce n'est pas une raison de se battre. Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, concentrates all his energy on a point, and especially on a point where we happen to be at variance. Il aime la lutte, and the place where he is least master is that at which he is most anxious to become so. In order to drive France out of Syria and restore Turkey, he forgot all the rest of Europe ; and once engaged in this career his vivacity of temper prevents his stopping in it. That is the danger. On tombe du côté où l'on penche. The affair of Tahiti, ridiculous as it was, was settled with Lord Aberdeen. I doubt whether it would have been with Lord P. For if he had said "you must quit Tahiti," I should have answered "I will do no such thing".

I said something about England and the U. States. He answered, 'C'est là un des points où j'ai profondément modifié la politique de mon pays, et on ne me le pardonnera pas. Depuis 50 ans la France appuie les États Unis contre l'Angleterre. Dans l'affaire du *Texas* je me suis uni à l'Angleterre et à la politique Anglaise en Amérique qui consiste à résister les envahissements des États Unis et à maintenir une espèce d'équilibre dans le Nouveau Monde ; et tant que je serai ici cette politique est celle de la France.'

This is the substance of our first conversation. He evidently wished me to believe that he was not alarmed for his own government by the change. But I observe

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that this event has occasioned deep dismay among the conservative party here; and Thiers is 'rayonnant de joie.' I am inclined, however, to think the alarm caused by Palmerston's return to power will strengthen Guizot.

I found Lord Cowley better than I had expected, but very ignorant of all that had passed. He seemed to hope, as indeed everybody does, that Lord Clarendon may come here. I saw Mme. de Lieven last night, but her *salon* was crowded, and I am to have a *tête-à-tête* with her at five to-day. I am sure I may rely on your keeping me well-informed of all that passes, for except through Jarnac they have no other means of trustworthy information here. On your side, I think our friends in London will be glad to find that M. Guizot is so well prepared to meet them half-way. I said to him all I could think of by way of assuring him of their favourable dispositions to him—especially on the part of Lord John. I expect soon to have an audience of the King, who is necessarily anxious. Guizot said upon hearing my whole story that he thought Peel was right to have resigned, as, even if he had carried his measure, he would have been at the mercy of his opponents afterwards.

From D. R. Pigot

Dublin : December 15, 1845.

O'Connell called upon me within the last hour to say that he intended making this day a public call upon all the Repeal Members to assemble in the House at the earliest moment for the purpose of supporting 'The Anti-Corn Law Ministry': such is his way of putting it. I had previously known that the strongest disposition exists among other members of the Repeal party, if a new government be formed under your Lordship, to aid it. It would be idle to predict the future conduct of the Repealers. But the decided tendency, at the present moment, is to rally round the old standard, and sustain, in a season of difficulty, the public men with whom the

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Irish popular party have so often contended in common for benefit to Ireland. It will be a great point gained if those who have hitherto seceded from Parliament shall be found once more voting cordially with us upon imperial ground.

From Lord Clarendon

December 17, 1845.

Do you think there would be any use in my seeing Graham as an *amicus curiae* and telling him that, if he and Peel really want you to relieve them from the difficulties into which they have got themselves and the country, they must act with greater frankness and cordiality than they now seem disposed to do? From a conversation which he had with G. Lewis yesterday he appears to underrate your embarrassments and to have no doubt about your forming a Government. I might perhaps set him right upon these points if you think it worth while, though for my own part I have no desire to promote the hazardous enterprise which they want you to undertake.

From Lord Minto

December 18, 1845.

I trust that this evening's mail will bring us the intelligence of your having abandoned the attempt to form a government. The more calmly I contemplate the prospect before us, the more strongly do I feel the inexpediency of your undertaking the government, if it can be honestly avoided; and I cannot but think it much more for the public advantage—and in a party sense, much more to your advantage—that Peel should be compelled to bear the burden of his own delinquencies and embarrassments for a while longer, instead of transferring it to your shoulders. The abolition of the Corn Law is obviously quite inevitable, and it matters little what hand holds the pen that orders execution to proceed upon the sentence already passed. That sentence was delivered

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in your letter from Edinburgh, and the deed is as much yours as it would be were you to be the mover of the Bill that is to give effect to it in Parliament.

From Lord Lansdowne

Thursday evening.

I hope you will not think me unnecessarily precise or pertinacious, but after communicating with Clarendon and Auckland, who entirely agree with me, I must earnestly request that before I am considered to have accepted office you will call a meeting (it would be a very short one) to whom the paper I left with you may be formally submitted, for it is the only ground on which I (and I believe those I have mentioned) could bring myself to accede, and knowing what entanglements arise from want of a thorough and compleat understanding in the first instance, I think it is not too much to expect that it should be adopted as a minute, or otherwise at once rejected by the proposed Cabinet before individual arrangements are made.

Memorandum by Lord Lansdowne

December 18, 1845.

I am anxious that it should be distinctly understood that—being convinced that no change so great as that of a total repeal of the Corn Laws can be carried without combining with it such a repeal or alleviation throughout the United Kingdom of burthens which are considered to press more particularly on occupiers of land as may reconcile a considerable portion of them, at least, to such a change—if I most reluctantly accept office in the present exigency, it is upon the admission that the members of the proposed Cabinet as well as Lord John Russell have decided that such relief shall be given to the extent of a million or a sum of that magnitude and made an integral part of the measure when brought forward.

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Chesham Place : December 19, 1845.

Present : Earl Grey ; Lord Clarendon ; Mr. Baring ; Lord Palmerston ; Mr. Labouchere ; Mr. Ellice ; Lord Auckland.

It is the opinion of this meeting that the repeal of the Corn Laws be accompanied by a relief to be extended in a mode hereafter to be agreed upon to the occupiers of land and payers of local burthens to the extent of not less than £700,000 in the first instance, and to be extended to one million as soon as the state of the revenue will permit. This to form an integral part of the Measure when submitted to Parliament, and stated as such. It is to be understood that no increase of taxation for this purpose is intended.

J. RUSSELL.

To Lord Lansdowne

December 19, 1845.

I have been very sensible of your kindness in all this tormenting business. But I have no doubt you will be very glad of a way to escape. Lord Grey has positively declined to sit in a Cabinet with Palmerston as Foreign Secretary. Palmerston says he can take no other office, but will support the Government out of office. I propose to write to the Queen to say that we found this morning the financial question very difficult and unsatisfactory, and that on proceeding to the arrangements of offices I had found such a difference between two of the principal persons who were proposed for the cabinet that I must decline proceeding any further. I hope you will approve.

*From Francis Baring*¹

December 19, 1845.

I am not surprised at your decision. After Lord Grey's formal objection it would have been impossible to have gone on with him and Palmerston in the same Cabinet, even if the immediate difference had been patched up.

¹ Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1839-41 ; later first Lord Northbrook.

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From the Duke of Bedford

December 19, 1845.

Your letter has afforded me inexpressible relief. I know not when I have felt so happy. The Duchess could not think what had come over me. I was ready to jump out of my skin.

From Lord Lansdowne

December 21, 1845.

Every hour's consideration on what has passed confirms me in the opinion that the result at least is good, and that as respects the publick things are now in the right position, or at all events the best position in the present unfavourable state of parties and of persons they could fall into. The mode, however, in which the affair has been brought to this conclusion is far from being so satisfactory, and I sincerely wish you had been enabled to report as to the decision on Thursday last that the noes had it. That the objection generally insisted upon should have been not even communicated privately to you till after a week had been consumed in overcoming other difficulties is quite unpardonable.

From Lord Minto

December 21, 1845.

I hope I may now safely congratulate you upon your relief from the most hopeless undertaking to which any man ever devoted himself—though it might have been better had the same decision been made two days earlier, resting on the general rather than on personal grounds. Knowing that the Bear had gone to Howick on his way to town, I had been prepared for the revival of the objection to Palmerston for Foreign Affairs, and was much pleased in not hearing of its having been brought forward, although well aware that it was not one to be for a moment entertained. The complaint of Palmerston's administration of his department is founded on the foreign policy generally

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of Melbourne's Government, and specially upon the particular views and measures in which we were nearly unanimous. The rabble of our party has indeed all along been opposed to the foreign policy of the late Government, and went along with Howick's nonsense, from the coast of Spain down to the coast of Syria. I shall, however, pardon Grey his demand for ostracism if it has the effect of disengaging you from the duty of forming a government. But I tremble lest his obstinacy should have yielded and again compelled you to resume your task.

*From Fox Maule*¹

December 22, 1845.

I have anxiously watched the events of the last ten days, and I confess that while I think the result to be the best for your own future position and the interests of the Liberal Party, and indeed of the country at large, I wish it had arrived sooner and before you had announced your determination to form a Government in the face of such immense difficulties. I think Lord Grey has acted very wrong in postponing his objections to Palmerston's going to the F.O. till, the play having been determined on, the cast of parts alone remained. He must have foreseen the more than probability of Palmerston's position, and had he stated his strong objections to you before the public were aware that you had committed yourself to the Queen, then this would have merged in your general difficulties which even enemies could not deny. At present it has all the appearance of a personal difference, and if ever there was a time when such should have been buried it is now. Moreover, Lord Grey could not have been ignorant that, with you in the First Minister's office, Lord Palmerston in the F.O. would have been very different from what it was in Lord Melbourne's time.

¹ Vice-President of the Board of Trade under Melbourne; Secretary at War, 1846-52; later Lord Panmure and eventually Earl of Dalhousie. See *The Panmure Papers*.

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*From Lord Bessborough*¹

December 23, 1845.

I am sure that you are quite right in the course that you have taken. It was quite enough to be threatened with the prospect of great opposition in Parliament without having internal squabbles and disputes to harass and worry you. I confess that I do not see, after all that has occurred six or seven years ago, how Palmerston could have been forced to give up the Foreign Office. It might possibly have been advantageous to the party if he had offered it himself, because there are many who have taken a strong opinion on the subject, as you and I very well know. But after all that was said, the abuse and squabbling upon it, I must repeat that, as at present advised, I should think him quite justified in refusing to be pushed out.

From Edward Ellice

December 23, 1845.

I do not hear a murmur anywhere about you. Both sides give you the credit so justly due for the gallantry of your attempt and the wisdom of your final decision under the circumstances of the case. Our friends, of course, are loud in their complaints of Howick—and naturally so—since all those who did not want office think he has been a lucky scape-goat for the party, and he must settle his account as well as he can with others.

To Lord Lansdowne

December 27, 1845.

It is a great pity that our arrangements broke off on a point which, to say the least, *appeared* to be a personal one. But I had no reason to expect that Howick would have made a peremptory objection to what seemed to all others the probable if not the most convenient appointment. He was the only one besides Cottenham in your

¹ Fourth Earl. As Lord Duncannon he had co-operated with Lord John Russell, Lord Durham, and Sir J. Graham, in drafting the Reform Bill.

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House who was zealous for taking office. Out of office he would have excited or supported the Opposition, as he did in regard to Lord Melbourne's Ministry in 1840, when he carried the second reading of Stanley's Irish Disfranchisement Bill. Thus it became hopeless to go on. I am sure the personal disappointment is not great. But I regret the opportunity lost of pacifying Ireland. These people cannot do it. All their measures are crimes or blunders. Maynooth and the Colleges Bill, though well intended, have done far more mischief than good. We shall have some sport on the protection preserve when Parliament meets.

From Lord Lansdowne

December 30, 1845.

It is good for you and for all to be out of the mess this time on any terms.

To Lord Lansdowne

January 1, 1846.

I do not see how any man is to point out remedies for the evils of Ireland. The first remedy is a good administration of the law, based on the consent of the enlightened and sober among the people. A mere party of officials, like the present set, can have neither authority nor affection.

From Lord Palmerston

January 5, 1846.

I meant to have written to you before, but have been putting it off from day to day, as idle men who have nothing very particular or pressing are apt to do. But I wanted to tell you that which is now stale and out of date—some things that were said to me before I left London about Grey's proceedings; and how, among other people, Ben Hawes and Charles Wood had come to me, one on one day and one on the other, to say how much they disapproved and regretted Howick's conduct. Hawes

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expressed in strong terms his conviction that nobody could ever act with Grey, saying that Grey and the Radicals agreed only on questions of Free Trade, and differed upon many others. Charles Wood said that his own opinions on our foreign policy had been much altered by events since we went out, and that his objection had been chiefly to the employment of the Legion, and not to the Syrian affair, and he thought that if he had been in town he would have prevented Grey from doing what he did; in which belief, however, Charles Wood was much mistaken. Old George Byng sent for me one morning, and said he was so glad of the turn things had taken, 'for, you know,' said he, 'if the Government had been formed that 'ere Earl Grey would have tripped up Lord John before three months had been over.'

It seems, however, that Peel has on the whole mended his position by resigning, for he has gained some good recruits for his Cabinet, and, having taken the benefit of the act, he is free from his former engagements and sets up business as a new man. I do not mean that his giving up his former Cabinet can be entirely considered as a *cessio bonorum*. People say in London that Peel's new Government cannot last three months, so great is the fury of the Tories against him and so deep the dissensions, which are only skinned over in the Cabinet. But I do not much trust these predictions.

*To Charles Wood*¹

January 5, 1846.

It is right you should know my intentions now that I have got from Peel the Queen's permission to state the circumstances of the late transactions. I mean to say that, considering all the difficulties, I could not go on without complete union and concert; that I did not obtain such concert, and failed to secure the assistance

¹ Later Chancellor of the Exchequer and first Viscount Halifax; married a daughter of the second Earl Grey, and acted in close association with his brother-in-law, the third Earl.

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of Lord Grey ; that I need not enter into his objection, but merely state that it was one which prevented his accepting the office I proposed to him. That, considering the late period at which I was informed of this objection, I thought it was my duty not to keep the Queen and the country any longer in suspense. That for various reasons I considered I could not dispense with the assistance of Lord Grey, who had taken so prominent a part in favour of free trade. You may demur to my alluding to the late period of the objection. That is to say I ought to take upon myself blame which I do not feel I deserve. Lord Grey's letter to me is correctly stated in the *Newcastle Chronicle*. How could I suppose that my Ministry would command 'the largest possible measure of public confidence and support' if Lord Palmerston did not belong to it? That he would not take the Colonial Office had been ascertained in 1835. It had again been ascertained by me in the late transaction. Of course he would not waive his personal dignity at the suggestion of Lord Grey, after refusing it so positively before. In fact, I never supposed Howick meant more than this—to give me a friendly warning not to bring back the Ministry of 1841. Now the offices I proposed to change were: First Lord of the Treasury, Home Office, Colonial Office, Admiralty, Secretary at War, Board of Trade, Ireland, Lord Lieutenant and Secretary, Woods and Forests, etc. If he meant I was not to admit Lord Palmerston, Lord Minto, Hobhouse, Baring, and Labouchere to the Cabinet, I must also have in justice excluded myself. Ellice may have done some harm, but not intentionally. I have mentioned the *Newcastle Chronicle*; it is wrong in stating that it was proposed to Palmerston to take the Colonial Office and be created a Peer. Nothing was proposed to him after Howick's objection, nothing could be. All I had ever said to him was that if he liked to take the Colonial Office he should have it, but I would never ask him to do that which he thought inconsistent

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with his honour. Nor could I force him to take any office. I think if Bessborough had been in town he might have done some good. As for Howick, he must be Prime Minister or nothing, and even then I should not like to be his colleague. But I do justice to his honest intentions; he has been mistaken. Mistrusting me, as he evidently did, he ought to have told me so at once, and then I could have considered without his presence whether it were possible to go on. To raise one difficulty after another, and then at the last moment to produce one which was insurmountable, was not fair treatment.

From Charles Wood

January 5, 1846.

I do not see any objection to what you propose to say, for I do not think that less would give a clear understanding of what did take place or of your reasons for giving up the task. . . . I was far from wishing you to take on yourself any blame which did not belong to you. I was only anxious, and not for his sake only, that as little should be said as possible on the point of *time* because on that point there might be a discussion and difference, which would tend to aggravate the present unhappy breach; and in which I think nobody would have much pleasure but Roebuck and such persons as he is, who would rejoice in anything which damages the Whig party.

Lord John Russell's Record of the Crisis

Monday, December 8, 1845.—Sitting in the evening with my family at Douglas's Hotel, a waiter informed me that a person wished to speak to me who had come a long distance. I declined to see him, and desired he would write. Upon which the waiter brought me a letter with G. E. Anson on the outside, enclosing one from the Queen, in which Her Majesty desired that

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I would attend her at Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight, upon affairs of great public importance.

Tuesday, December 9.—I set off at ten in the morning, after seeing Dr. Simpson. Went in a carriage and four post horses to Newcastle, which I reached at half-past eleven at night.

Wednesday, December 10.—Went by express train to London, where I arrived before nine o'clock. I wrote a letter to Sir James Graham, asking him the best passage to Osborne House, and also proposing to see him on my return. He replied, expressing his readiness to see me on my return, and giving me the information I required.

Thursday, December 11.—I went by an early train to Southampton, and, after waiting there an hour, went by the ordinary steamer to Cowes. I reached Osborne House before four o'clock, and soon afterwards had an audience of the Queen. Prince Albert called me into the drawing-room, where H.M. was, and remained there during the audience. The Queen said at once, 'I suppose you know why I have sent for you; it is to form a government.' I replied that I had gathered from the newspapers that Sir Robert Peel had resigned. But that H.M. must remember that I was the leader only of a minority, and was thus not in a condition to form a Ministry. The Queen put into my hands a letter of Sir R. Peel's to H.M. and desired me to read it. The letter stated that, on November 1, Sir R. Peel had proposed to his colleagues a plan for the immediate suspension of the Corn Laws duties, either by Order in Council, or by Act of Parliament, in either case Parliament to be immediately summoned. Also a plan to diminish gradually the duties on corn, with a view to their total repeal—'in the spirit of caution and forbearance,' and accompanied by measures for the diminution of burdens on land. I stated that the difficulties were certainly diminished by this communication. But I could not at present accept the commission to form a government. But that if Her Majesty would permit me I would

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consult such of my friends as were within reach, and for that purpose I would set off for London early the next morning. The Queen was graciously pleased to consent.

Friday, December 12.—I staid at Osborne House that night. While I was at breakfast the next morning, Prince Albert came into the room. His chief topic was the importance of retaining the services of the Duke of Wellington to the Queen and country as Commander-in-Chief. I entirely agreed with him, and suggested that H.M. should write to the Duke of Wellington expressing her personal wish that he should remain Commander-in-Chief in case I should become Minister. This was done, and the Queen afterwards informed the Duke that I had fully concurred in the wish expressed by H. Majesty. I arrived in town at 2 o'clock. Lord Cottenham, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Clarendon, and afterwards Mr. Macaulay, if I recollect right, joined me. They were of opinion that I should endeavour to ascertain, more in detail, the plan of Sir Robert Peel. I asked Sir James Graham to come to me, which he did at half-past five. He could not inform me more particularly of Sir Robert Peel's plan. He said that two propositions were laid by Sir R. Peel before his Cabinet. First, that there should be a suspension of the duties on corn for a limited period. Secondly, that the Corn Laws should be reconsidered with a view to their total repeal. That Sir R. Peel, never having obtained the assent of his colleagues to these two preliminary propositions, had gone no further.

Saturday, December 13.—We had another meeting. F. Baring was present. Before the meeting I had received a letter from Sir James Graham, informing me that Sir R. Peel declined to communicate to me any details of his plan. I then proposed to my friends that I should draw up the heads or outline of a plan, and communicate it to Sir Robert Peel. At two o'clock Lord Lansdowne and I proceeded to Windsor Castle and had an interview of Her Majesty. I informed the Queen of

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our intentions. H.M. asked if she should communicate these intentions to Sir Robert Peel. I replied I had no objection to her doing so, but that I did not ask H.M. to make this communication. I had proposed to my friends to meet on Monday to consider of a plan for the settlement of the Corn Laws. At the request of Lord Lansdowne the meeting was put off till Tuesday at one.

Monday, December 15.—Many of my friends came to town. I saw Lord Grey, who appeared more hasty than was necessary. Ellice came with him.

Tuesday, December 16.—I received a letter from the Queen, with an enclosure. The enclosure was a letter from Sir Robert Peel to H.M. giving reasons why he should not be informed beforehand of our plan. We proceeded to discuss the Corn Law, and agreed that a simple repeal of all duties was the best course. Lord Grey suggested that Sir R. Peel should be informed of our intention, and asked if he had any insuperable objection. I put it in the way contained in my letter. The Queen wrote to me the same night informing me that she had sent my letter to Sir R. Peel.

Wednesday, December 17.—I received a letter from the Queen in the afternoon, desiring me either to come to Windsor to dinner, or after dinner, and to bring Lord Lansdowne. Lord Lansdowne and I dined at Eden Lodge, and went after dinner to Windsor Castle. The Queen and Prince Albert desired us to attend them to the Queen's sitting room, and H.M. showed me a reply of Sir R. Peel to my letter. H.M. and the Prince were of opinion that we might depend on the support of Sir R. Peel.

Thursday, December 18.—We met at Chesham Place. The persons present were : Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl of Clarendon, Earl Grey, Earl of Auckland, Lord Monteagle, Mr. Baring, Mr. Ellice, Lord Palmerston, Sir John Hobhouse, Mr. Macaulay, Mr. Labouchere, Lord Cottenham, Sir George Grey, Duke of Bedford, Lord John Russell. The letter of Sir R. Peel was read

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We agreed that it gave a sufficient foundation to form a Ministry. Five dissented from this opinion. I then said that I hoped after the decision was made we should all agree to work together. Baring spoke in the name of the rest, and said he thought it was their duty to do so.

Friday, December 19.—I saw Lord Palmerston at half-past eleven in the morning. He told me he did not feel any wish to come into office, as his habits were altered by leading a private life. But that the only office in which he would be useful was the Foreign Office, and if he came into the Ministry he would take no other. This he said in answer to a question of mine. I then told him that he knew as well as I did the impression that had been made against him as a warlike politician ; that I did not agree in that impression and thought it unjust ; that if he had thought it should so far be yielded to that he should take the Colonial Office, I was ready to agree. He said he thought that would be admitting the justice of the impression. I said in that case I would offer him the Foreign Office and no other. He agreed to accept it. At twelve we had a small meeting to consider of the business on hand. Lord Lansdowne wished some security on this head, which Mr. Baring and I gave him. When this meeting was over, I asked Lord Grey to speak with me alone. He referred to a letter which he had written to me respecting protection and Ireland. I referred on the other hand to my answer, with which he seemed to be tolerably satisfied. I proposed to him to take the Colonial Office. He then said he wished to know how the Ministry was to be constituted. I mentioned Lord Cottenham for the Great Seal, and said, ‘ I suppose you don’t object to him, do you ? ’ I then mentioned several other offices, and Lord Palmerston for the Foreign Office. He objected to this appointment, but said he was ready to see Lord P. in the Colonial Office, and to serve with him as a colleague. I told him no such arrangement could take place. He was quite ready to be left out of the Ministry. I spoke of this

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a little, especially with reference to C. Wood. But I said I wished him to alter his view. Immediately afterwards I called in Lord Auckland, and asked if they would go on in the House of Lords without Lord Grey. He said he thought not. I sent for Ellice, or Ellice came to me. I desired him to go and speak to Lord Grey, saying I would not go on without him. He came back and said Lord Grey would not change.

From Richard Cobden

February 6, 1846.

A cold in my head, which I caught in returning from Manchester yesterday, and which has settled down into a tormenting earache, confines me to the house, and will prevent my obeying Mr. Tufnell's summons for to-morrow. I found the prevalent feeling in the country to be more and more favourable to Sir Robert Peel's measure, and I am of opinion that we should not be warranted in the eyes of the country in doing anything to obstruct or endanger it. This I know to be your opinion, and I presume the party will act accordingly. Villiers will, of course, move his resolution in such a way as shall preclude the protectionists from giving a factious support, and failing in that I should give my hearty support to the government. Yet I do not despair of seeing *all parties* agree in making the repeal *immediate* after it is seen that the government scheme must pass into law. It is obviously the opinion of the farming class (I mean the *renters*) to a man that it had better be immediate. The protectionist landlords—the *political landowners*—will surely weigh the cost to them of keeping the League alive, flushed with victory, and with nothing else to do but concentrate all their efforts upon the Counties. They will purchase the possession of their wretched rag of protection for three years by the loss of half their political influence. This, you would say, I shall not regret. But the honest truth is I am most anxious to put an end honourably to the agitation. I have

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been taxed beyond my powers in every way. Yet I am so far pledged to the country that if the corn law is left for three years I can't escape. I found the Leaguers in Lancashire resolved to a man to sustain the organisation ; and really one cannot blame them when they see the Duke of Richmond and the *Post* telling the farmers that if protection be now abolished it must be reinstated before the three years are out. Still I hope that calmer counsels will prevail after a week's debating in the House, and then, by *privately* urging these views upon the more sagacious of the protectionists, they may be induced to accept *immediate*. The League may be dissolved the day after the Queen's assent to the immediate repeal—if Peel will merely state that butter and cheese shall be treated on revenue grounds, and the duty abolished when the exchequer will afford it.

*From Lord Ashley*¹

May 25, 1846.

You must allow me to thank you very sincerely, in the name of those whom I have so long represented, for your speech and support on Friday last. It was a good work and worthy of your public and private station. I can do no more than heartily pray that it will please Almighty God to give to you and to your children that consolation and relief you have endeavoured to obtain for others.

From Charles Wood

June 30, 1846.

In case you wish to know it before you leave Osborne, I think I may say that Grey will make no difficulty. I told him that I had represented to you the weakness in the H. of Lords, and the advantage in that respect of having him in the Government ; that you had admitted that, but feared there being much that would be uncom-

¹ To Hodder's official biography must now be added the admirable study of Lord Shaftesbury by Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, 1923.

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fortable, if he was in the Cabinet, though without any personal objection to him on your part ; that you had said it might be possible to include him, and that I had interposed and said that no offer ought to be made unless it was to be accepted ; that you had said that no *offer* could be made as things stood, and that I had said I would see whether it was possible for you to take office in present circumstances. I then told him under charge of secrecy that you had seen Peel, which he said materially changed his views ; that Oregon was out of the way, which he felt, but that he had before been quite prepared to waive any objection on the score of Palmerston. I then said that there was no use in his coming in unless he meant to make things go smoothly, and that if matters were to be as they were towards the end of his time with Lord Melbourne, he had better stay out, and that above all the Irish Church must wait till social questions were disposed of. He said that he did not wish to press that or anything else *precipitately*, and that he felt the necessity of making the machine work easily if he came in. He felt the separation from all his friends very much if he was not included. He and George Grey are coming to dine here to-day quietly ; and I think that you may reckon on its being *extremely probable* that he will take the Colonial Office if offered.

From George Anson ¹

Buckingham Palace : July 3, 1846.

I called upon Lord Melbourne to-day and he showed me the letter which he had just received from you, and I think he is perfectly satisfied with the result of what has taken place. I am quite sure that his taking office now would have been as injurious to his own reputation as it would have been for the public interest, and in his present state of health he could not have incurred any fatigue without great risk.

¹ Private Secretary to the Prince Consort till his death in 1849, when his duties were divided between Colonel Phipps and Colonel (later General) Grey.

CHAPTER V

THE SPANISH MARRIAGES

THE change of Government and the return of Palmerston to the Foreign Office were followed by the renewal of embittered antagonism between Great Britain and France.¹ The conciliatory Aberdeen had succeeded in healing the wounds inflicted by the Turco-Egyptian crisis, and had established friendly, and indeed affectionate, relations with Guizot. On the occasion of Queen Victoria's visit to Louis Philippe in 1845, the difficult question of the marriage of the young Queen of Spain had been fully discussed, and a compromise had been reached. Louis Philippe naturally desired that the dynastic relationship between Paris and Madrid, dating from the accession of a Bourbon prince in 1700, should be maintained by a Bourbon marriage, while Great Britain was no less naturally anxious in 1845 than at the time of the Treaty of Utrecht to prevent the union of the two crowns. Though Isabella was still but a child, every Court and Chancery offered advice in the choice of a husband. Metternich suggested a son of Don Carlos; but Don Carlos was a rebel. The Queen Regent Christina favoured a son of Louis Philippe; but the British veto blocked the way. Espartero wished for a petty German prince, such as Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, younger brother of the Prince of Portugal; but here the veto of France

¹ Sir Henry Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, iii., chaps. vii.-viii., is here a first-hand authority. For the French version see Guizot, *Mémoires*, viii. 100-338; Thureau-Dangin, *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet*, vol. vi.; Denys Cochin, *Louis Philippe*. Cp. J. Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, chaps. ix. and x.

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interposed. By the process of exhaustion the choice was narrowed down to the Neapolitan Bourbons and to Isabella's first cousins, the Duke of Cadiz and the Duke of Seville. To this arrangement Aberdeen made no objection ; and he also consented to a marriage between the Duc de Montpensier, youngest son of the French King, and the Infanta Louisa, the sister of the Spanish Queen, as soon as the Queen herself had children. The Eu agreement was completed by a promise that the British Government would not support the candidature of the Prince of Coburg.

The Eu contract bound no one but its authors, who had no legal or moral right to fetter the choice of the Spanish Court. Early in 1846 a visit of the Prince of Coburg to Lisbon alarmed Guizot, who instructed the French Ambassador to inform Aberdeen that France would consider herself freed from her engagements if the Coburg candidate were to be seriously considered. The loyalty of the British Court and Government was not in doubt ; but the Queen Regent, who naturally desired a good match for her daughter, was encouraged to smile on the Coburg candidature by the British Minister at Madrid, who forwarded a letter from Christina to Lisbon by a British messenger. Bulwer was sharply censured by Aberdeen, who informed Guizot of the indiscretion ; and the Prince of Coburg, finding the British Court and Government opposed to the match, declined the offer. Bresson, the French Minister at Madrid, seized the opportunity to persuade the Regent that Louis Philippe would agree to a simultaneous marriage—or at any rate announcement of marriage—of the Queen and her sister, and suggested to Guizot that France was freed from the Eu convention by the intrigues of the British agent.

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The King was horrified at the suggested breach of faith, and desired to send a written disavowal of Bresson to the Regent; but at this moment the situation was changed by the fall of the Peel Ministry and by a dispatch from Palmerston to Bulwer, dated July 19, of which he gave a copy to Jarnac, the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, and which named as the three candidates for the Queen's hand Leopold of Saxe-Coburg and the two Spanish Princes, adding that Great Britain had no preference, and that no one had a right to interfere. This dispatch, at which Lord John merely glanced on a Sunday morning as he was starting for church, aroused Louis Philippe's suspicion that Palmerston, whose hostility to France was notorious, might in collusion with Bulwer steal a march on him. He accordingly forwarded to the Regent a copy of the dispatch, which also contained a sharp criticism of Spanish methods of government well calculated to turn her against English counsellors and to scare her by the spectre of a fresh revolt. The fatal dispatch removed the scruples of Louis Philippe, who shared Guizot's terror lest he should at any moment be confronted with the *fait accompli* of a Coburg marriage. The result speedily appeared in the announcement of the forthcoming simultaneous marriage of the Queen of Spain to the Duke of Cadiz and of her sister to the Duc de Montpensier. The breach of the Eu agreement aroused hot indignation in England, and even the gentle Aberdeen joined in the chorus of blame, though acquitting his friend Guizot of the charge of treachery. Though Palmerston was largely to blame for the event, the breach of faith ruined the Anglo-French entente, weakened the international position of France, and tarnished the reputation of her ruler. 'Was not the candidature of Leopold imminent,' wrote the impenitent Guizot to Jarnac on

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October 15, 'and had we not to take corresponding action? Lord John Russell, as I imagine, was a spectator and not an actor. I would willingly refer the question to him. I ask that clear and enlightened mind, that just and generous heart, Is it worthy of him or his Government to be or to be believed the sponsors of new revolutionary movements in Spain?' Lord John, however, shared in the general condemnation of French action, though he regretted the dispatch of July 19. More than one of his colleagues expressed resentment at their exclusion from the discussion of issues which might lead the country into war; but Palmerston had no regrets, pointing out that British statesmen had been too much afraid of France.

While the blame for the simultaneous marriages was laid on Paris, not on Madrid, the relations between Great Britain and Spain naturally suffered from the shock. The situation required tact and forbearance on both sides; but when the overthrow of Louis Philippe in 1848 was followed by an insurrection at Madrid and Narvaez suspended the constitutional guarantees, Palmerston, without the knowledge of the Cabinet, instructed Bulwer to advise the Spanish Government to take warning from events in France, to adopt a constitutional system, and to summon the men in whom the Liberal party reposed confidence. The dispatch was presented to the Premier, who declined to receive it on the ground that it was 'offensive to the dignity of a free and independent nation'; and its publication in the Opposition Press increased the indignation of the Government. Bulwer was denounced by Narvaez as an accomplice in the insurrection of the Progressistas, and on May 19 he received notice to leave Madrid within forty-eight hours. His expulsion was followed by the departure of

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the Spanish Ambassador from England. The action of the Spanish Government was peremptory and excessive, and the charges against Bulwer proved to be groundless ; but Palmerston's provocations were condemned by the champions of a gentler diplomacy, among them Lansdowne and Grey, Peel and Aberdeen.

Palmerston's intervention in the affairs of Portugal was less unsuccessful than in those of Spain. The accession of Queen Maria in 1834 and her marriage to a Coburg prince in 1836 had been followed by a decade of peace. In 1846, however, when she unconstitutionally forbade the statement of grievances in the Cortes, the north rose in revolt. Palmerston declared the reply of the people to be ' natural and just,' urged concessions and amnesty, and explained to the Queen with his habitual frankness that he could not help her to misgovern her subjects. She was ready to compromise ; but Saldanha, the Commander-in-Chief, threatened to resign unless Spain were invited to join in crushing the rebels. In March, 1847, he marched on Oporto, which was held by the Junta ; but no conflict occurred, and in April the Saldanha Ministry resigned. The Queen now accepted the British offer to mediate, and Colonel Wylde was sent to Oporto to advise conditional submission. The Junta declined the terms proposed, and when the adherents of Don Miguel joined the revolt the Queen summoned the members of the Quadruple Alliance to her aid. Thereupon Great Britain, France, and Spain, who had set her on her throne, drew up terms to be offered to the Junta and undertook to enforce their acceptance. This vigorous intervention was denounced by Stanley in the House of Lords and Joseph Hume in the House of Commons. For a moment Lord John feared defeat ; but the danger was averted by the support of Peel. The

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threat of coercion proved sufficient, and after the surrender of its fleet the Junta yielded on terms. Lord John had been no whole-hearted adherent of intervention, and after the crisis was over he exhorted his Foreign Minister to stand aloof from the struggle of parties at Lisbon.

From Lord Palmerston

August 19, 1846.

Your description of the difference between the positions of England and France in regard to Spanish affairs is quite correct, and will, I fear, prevent any very sincere co-operation. Events must decide between the two, and it is possible that they may turn out in our favour. I have not put in your paragraph, because the Spanish Government seem prone enough already to bow to the dictates of France, and it is perhaps as well that England should not help to crush their already broken spirit. The real fact is that if Christina was backed by the Cortes in declaring for Coburg, and sustained by the nation, Louis Philippe might for a time be angry, but he could not carry his anger further than words and small cabals.

From Lord Normanby (British Ambassador in Paris)

Paris: August 23, 1846.

I am very sorry to have so soon after my arrival here to make a disagreeable communication to you, but I feel it right that you should at once know exactly how matters stand here. I find the prejudice against P. so much stronger than I could have expected, and existing with such inveteracy in such high quarters, that I am sure it will require your constant vigilance to soften down the tone of communications in which (if not inserted by you) conciliation is never studied, and at which there is such a predisposition to take offence. Be assured, though I do not enter into further details at present, that I have

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painfully convinced myself that there is danger in the extent to which this feeling exists or I should never have addressed you so soon on the subject. It appears, though P.'s visit was at first well taken, that something—I know not what—occurred this spring in the course of it which gave additional offence to the King. The immediate causes of complaint are still the first dispatch to Bulwer and that a proposition made on the 19th of July, with a desire to act in concert in the affairs of Spain, has never yet been answered. These two complaints I have mentioned at the same time to P., and it rather goes against my feelings—valuing him as I do and acting myself with pleasure with him—not to state the whole extent of the case as fully to him as I have done to you; but (however involuntary may be such influence) no one ever acts better with other parties for knowing that they entertain an exaggerated recollection of the past and an unjust suspicion still in full force against himself. But it is absolutely necessary for his sake as well as our own that you should know how very strong this feeling is with the present French Government and with the Court, for you must be constantly on your guard against any just or plausible cause being given for the outbreak of this feeling. I shall be unremitting in my efforts to soften it down, and I have already taken care to have it understood that my firm conviction was that he had just as much at heart as any of us the continuance of a good understanding with France. This has made me uneasy because it has taken me rather by surprise, but personally I have had every reason to be most gratified with the cordiality of my reception in all quarters.

From Lord Normanby

Paris: September 3, 1846.

I can only to-day refer you to my dispatches upon this most extraordinary piece of trickery on the part of Guizot.

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From Lord Clarendon

September 8, 1846.

I have sent Palmerston some letters from Olozaga and Mendizabal, who are indignant at the treachery of L. Philippe and his undisguised attack upon the independence of their country. I do not wonder at it, for since the most insolent days of Napoleon there has been nothing to equal the pretensions of L. Philippe or the conduct of his Ambassador at Madrid. Olozaga and Mendizabal want advice as to the course they should pursue and should recommend to the hapless D. Enrique, who is still bathing at Ostende, but they want also to lay their troubles at our door for having advised them not to attempt an insurrection or to marry the Queen by assault to her cousin. They are, as I found Espartero was, prepared for any desperate experiment now, and they will probably do what in them lies and secure their own perpetual exile and thwart anything we might attempt in their behalf. The newspapers say there is a strong anti-Montpensier feeling getting up at Madrid; but I have two letters from there this morning which say it will all subside, and that the people will submit to the marriage.

From Lord Palmerston

September 10, 1846.

Louis Philippe and Guizot have carried their point by boldness, decision and promptitude. We have been defeated by our timidity, hesitation, and delay. It is quite clear now that we were all of us wrong and that Bulwer was right. We have stood more in awe of France than France has stood in awe of us; and while we have been shilli-shallying under the fear of giving her temporary displeasure, she has braved our dissatisfaction, and seized hold of a permanent and important advantage. It would have been wiser for us to have made her angry by foiling her intrigues, than to have allowed her to triumph at our expense and detriment. But so it is and

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always will be with France—if others are firm they stop or recede ; if others recede or falter they advance and rush on. If we had at once mustered up courage to close with the offer to Coburg, and had settled that marriage for the Queen, the Montpensier marriage might have been prevented, or would at all events have been less injurious. But we were too lately come into office, we were not sufficiently masters of the subject and of its bearings and of former transactions about it ; and we have all—I mean the whole Whig Party—been too much afraid of France. Besides, we were not sure of our own Court, and we did not believe the French Government to be as tricky as they have shown themselves, and we thought we should have more time to act. But Louis Philippe and Guizot, like practical and sagacious men, determined to knock us down at once, and make an apology afterwards if necessary to pacify us. The Queen and the Prince are very much shocked and disgusted and more surprised than they need be at the whole proceeding and at the manner in which it has been conducted. While there is life there is hope, and till the marriage is actually solemnised we ought not to relax our efforts to prevent it. I would propose to you to write a dispatch to Normanby to remonstrate, to Bulwer to protest, and to Gordon and Westmoreland and Buchanan at Petersburg, to try whether those three Powers of the East cannot be got to express some feeling on the subject. The Queen twice desired me to say to Jarnac that she is not only vexed at the proceeding, but *distressed* at the manner in which it has been carried on. She wishes to acquit L. P. and throw the blame on Guizot. If this Montpensier marriage takes place you should look upon it as a timely warning, and be doubly careful to put our National Defences in order both by sea and by land, at home and in our foreign garrisons. The French will at any time be able to rouse Spain against us in war by holding out to them the reconquest of Gibraltar. Joinville did not visit Malta with his seven liners and four

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steamers for nothing ; let us know as much as he now does as to the state of the defences of that fortress and the calibre of its guns.

To Lord Lansdowne

September 11, 1846.

The Queen of Spain's marriage has been what is called a *coup de maître* on the part of the French Government. That is to say, they have deceived their allies, and forced the Queen into a marriage she detests, in order to obtain a young girl of fourteen for one of the French princes. The whole affair resembles in its commencement the attempt of Napoleon in 1808, and it is not impossible its progress may be similar.

From Lord Palmerston

September 12, 1846.

I had a long discussion with Jarnac yesterday, all very friendly, but in which I stated very highly our objections and the fatal effects of the Montpensier marriage on the Entente Cordiale and its inevitable tendency to bring about in many possible cases conflict between England and France. I believe that if we all take a high tone, not of menace but of displeasure, with a strong anticipation of the grave though undefined effects which it must have on the relations between the two countries, we shall be able at least to delay the marriage and then events may arise to prevent it. But we must not ask for delay, but for entire prevention. If we ask for the latter we may get the former, but if we ask for the former we shall get nothing. I hear from several quarters that at Paris they begin to grow very uneasy at the displeasure created here and the dissatisfaction in Spain. Bunsen has just told me that the Princess of Prussia has heard this from the Duchess of Orleans.

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From Lord Clarendon

September 12, 1846.

I send you a letter from Palmerston which I received yesterday. I had afterwards a long conversation with him, and found that although he was justly indignant at the treacherous conduct of the French Government, yet that he was not meditating a formal protest nor any manifestation of ill humour beyond a warning, as between friends, that the Montpensier marriage if persisted in must be destructive of cordiality and intimacy between the two Governments. For my own part, however desirous I am to make allowance for the dynastic monomania of L. Philippe or the vanity and ambition of the French people, I agree in all Palmerston's views, and he has asked me to hold the same language as his own to Jarnac and M. Dumon (the *Ministre des Travaux Publics*), who are coming to-morrow. P. said that the Queen and Prince Albert were very angry, but thought that the *fourberie* must be Guizot's and not L. P.'s. The Queen desired Palmerston to tell Jarnac from Her how much surprised and distressed she had been by these events.

From Lord Palmerston

September 13, 1846.

I send to the Queen by this messenger, and ask her to send on to you if she approves of it, a draft of a note for Bulwer to present to the Spanish Government. Time is of great consequence in this matter, and if you see no particular objection to the draft, perhaps you will send it at once to Addington to be put forward, and you can return him at the same time Bulwer's dispatches, which are in the box. The private letters I should wish to be sent back to me. These dispatches and letters encourage us to hope that a vigorous effort at Madrid may still be of some avail, especially if we can make the French Government pause; and for the latter purpose I framed my notes to Jarnac. If you and the Queen do

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not object, I believe it would be a good thing to give Bulwer the rank of Ambassador, which need not involve any increase of salary, or at most a very trifling one, but it would give him easier access to the Queen, and if done should be done directly. I have taken steps to give him assistance, and I have told him to draw freely on secret service money for newspaper or other political agitation, but carefully to avoid having anything to do with insurrections.

From Charles Wood

September 18, 1846.

The object of my letter is to repeat what I once said to you, and to impress upon you the necessity of taking over into your hands the direction of the *detailed terms* of foreign matters with France. A state of hostile feeling between the Ministries of the two countries has been produced. I press upon you to look to these things yourself. I see no other remedy. The Cabinet cannot interfere, for the mischief is done before we hear of anything. It is no easy matter, I am well aware, even for you. The Queen's letter and your answer were perfect in their way. Forgive my venturing to intrude all this advice, but I am not a little alarmed.

From Lord Lansdowne

Wiesbaden: September 20, 1846.

I was the less surprised at the Spanish *coup de main*, that it has always appeared to me the thing uppermost in the thoughts of the French Court and of those statesmen who are within its influence; and I believe they would not have been sorry if we had urged the Coburg alliance, and would have given way before it, if it favoured a means of securing the other. The ultimate advantages will not, I am convinced, be great to them, but it will sow the seeds of future dissension, if not confusion, in which we must be more or less involved, and ought not to be tamely acquiesced in, or without the strongest protest against

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such a sacrifice of public tranquillity to supposed family interests.

From Charles Wood

September 21, 1846.

I quite agree in all you say, and it is because there is so much real ground for dissatisfaction and complaint against France that I am the more anxious that we should avoid anything in conduct which may aggravate this state of things into a quarrel. I am very glad indeed that you have seen Jarnac; forgive me for saying that I hope you will continue to see him. I think it will be of the greatest service in preventing unfortunate impressions being conveyed to Paris. I have the fullest confidence in your managing the matter properly. I am only afraid of mischief being done when and where you have hardly the opportunity of preventing it.

From Lord Palmerston

Broadlands: September 25, 1846.

I believe that you and the Queen are right about the rank of Ambassador to Bulwer; it would probably just at the present moment not much increase our chances of success, and it would make our failure (if we fail) more marked. It would be more useful by and by when Isabella shall have more personal influence on the course of events. I had a long talk yesterday with Dumon, the Minister of Public Works, whom Jarnac brought down here for that purpose at my request. I stated to him very strongly, though with perfect civility and good humour, our objections to the Montpensier match, and the consequences which it might thereafter produce, as well as those which it must at once produce on the relations between France and England. I dwelt much upon the assurances spontaneously given by Louis Philippe that the marriage, if it did take place, should not be till after the Queen of Spain had had children (in the plural), and said that it would be unfortunate if

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on this occasion it should happen for the first time that the promise of a French King should not be realised. Of course, he could give me no other answer than a repetition of the old arguments often used by Jarnac ; but I was glad to talk to them both together, because there was a better chance of making each feel the fallacy of the other's arguments than of his own, and I had an opportunity of pointing out to them in some instances the discrepancy between their respective arguments, and especially when, on the one hand, Dumon said that Montpensier would live at Paris and remain a French Prince, and that France would gain a Princess, but Spain would not gain a Prince, while, on the other hand, Jarnac ten minutes afterwards, being asked by me whether it was true, as we had been informed, that the French Court had written to Madrid, that if Coburg should marry the Queen Montpensier should not marry the Infanta, replied it was perfectly true, and, drawing himself up in an attitude of conscious dignity, added that the King of the French would not have consented that his son should be the Second Person in Spain, if the Prince of Coburg was to be the First. I said that this sentence of his was an admission of the whole of our case, and that what we objected to was that a French Prince should be second, and by that means possibly also the First Person in Spain.

From Lord Palmerston

September 27, 1846.

I send you for your consideration and for that of the Queen a draft of a note which I would propose to send to Bulwer to present to the Spanish Government, and it would probably be right to send a copy of it to the French Government at the same time. It seems to me to state concisely the treaty and legal objections to the marriage, and though it reserves to England the right to take any course which might be thought right at the time in a dispute about the Spanish succession, it does

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not pledge the country to any particular course. It is unlucky that our squadron did not remain at Cadiz ; it would be well if Auckland were to order Parker to stay at Cadiz, or if the French squadron should have slipped in there during our absence, and if the presence of the two squadrons in the same port would place them in an embarrassing position, then he might go to Carthage, or any other good and important port on the mainland of Spain, and remain there till Bulwer sends him word to go away. This sort of demonstration often tells upon a negotiation ; and it would do no harm at the Tuileries if any orders about fitting out line-of-battle ships could be given in our dockyards, and mentioned in the newspapers, even if no active or real steps were taken to carry them into effect. Louis Philippe's letter to the Queen was marked by the twaddling of age and by the consciousness of being in the wrong, and a little demonstration on our part, not amounting to a threat and committing us to nothing, might have its effect upon a mind in that double condition.

From Lord Normanby

Paris : October 9, 1846.

The only incident here which has happened likely to interest you is my last interview with the King. They had put about, for the sake of influencing the Bourse, that I had been invited to dine with him and had *refused* to go. I must have been as great a *bear* as those who for their own purposes put it about to have done so, but in fact no such invitation was given, nor is it usual in family *fêtes* to give any ; but as this report was unpleasant to all parties, I took an early opportunity of going again to one of the evening receptions at St. Cloud. I have put down in the secret and confidential dispatch to Palmerston what I thought prudent to record in such a shape. There was much about the Queen and the Prince by name which I have thought better to omit, as it was only an ebullition of feeling at the just reproaches

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he had received, and I have given the substance of the communication, but not mentioned him by name. It is very important that anything which passes between the King and me should be kept as secret as possible and should not be too widely known even amongst official persons, because this footing which he has established (particularly since his present difficulties) of allowing me to say anything to him and of discussing matters with him may under certain circumstances be very useful.

From Lord Normanby

Paris : October 23, 1846.

When you read my confidential dispatch to Palmerston you will see that the King is evidently uneasy. He shows many symptoms of wanting to get rid of Guizot, but he needs him to defend them *both* in the Chamber, and if he was turned loose he fears that certainly he would only defend himself.

*From the Comte de Jarnac*¹

October 27, 1846.

I have received your two letters and the extract of a letter from Lord Palmerston, which you were so good as to address to me yesterday, and I lose no time in forwarding them to M. Guizot. Of course, England is free to chuse her own line of policy, but we wish the responsibility of this choice to rest with herself. Of course, friendly and confidential intercourse between the Courts *may* be considered impossible. I for one, after all that I have witnessed here during the last five years, can never assent to this proposition in the abstract. At all events, it must be established that it is not by us that this impossibility has been proclaimed. When I left Paris in July last, my instructions were to use every endeavour that no alteration should take place in the

¹ French Chargé d'Affaires. Lord John's long letter of October 26 is printed by Walpole, ii. 5-7.

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relations of the two Courts as they then existed. All with whom I have from the first dealt must, I think, admit that I laboured with no ordinary efforts and ardour to fulfill these instructions, the more so that the great crisis at Madrid coincided with your advent to power. Why were misunderstandings so serious from the first allowed to creep in, notwithstanding our most anxious endeavours? Why, in the face of the constant and manifold declarations of my Court, was the matter allowed so long to rest upon the pressing offers of the Court of Madrid and the apparently official assent of the British Court to the candidature of Prince Leopold? Why, when views so widely different from any that I had ever been previously led to conceive were entertained by the new Cabinet with respect to the contemplated marriage of the Duc de Montpensier with the Infanta, and to its consequences, was this subject never alluded to with us? Upon these points wiser than myself must decide.

I will conclude, my dear Lord John, with one observation upon what I have lately witnessed here—the task of maintaining a truly friendly intercourse between France and England has always appeared to me far more difficult, and to require much more daily care, vigilance, and mutual forbearance than the mere spectators can ever conceive. The difficulties which the King has contended with, in this matter, have been immense and such, I firmly believe, as he only could have overcome. As to M. Guizot personally, the struggles he has encountered in this cause are without any parallel in what I have ever witnessed in the Parliament of England. Indeed, the courage and constancy which he has been called upon to display are not unworthy of the admiration and (why should I not say what I feel?) of the emulation of yourself, who, I am told, are reckoned here the ‘bravest of the brave.’ Often, when called upon in France to defend the spirit of compromise, forbearance and (I use the word advisedly) of deference to the opinions and judgment

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of Lord Aberdeen, which animated the King's policy, M. Guizot has proudly pointed, as well as those around him, to the corresponding spirit which directed the policy of England and to the peculiar sympathy of this great nation for the King and for the Constitutional Government of France. This was admitted by the more impartial of our opponents, and we were told that these feelings were likely to prevail so long as the full influence of the King and of his Government were principally employed, at any peril to themselves, in restraining the adventurous spirit of the nation. But we were also forewarned that the day our Government would be obliged to pursue or rather to maintain any interest more peculiarly their own, not in any hostile spirit to England, but in a manner not strictly in accordance with her views, from that day, all would be forgotten, and the King's most bitter revilers would be found here. This I have always denied till now. What have I now to answer? As I have referred to myself, my dear Lord John, perhaps I may add that I have very strictly investigated all that has occurred upon this question in which I have been, I believe, the principal 'intermédiaire' between the two Courts. I have found nothing which would justify me, in my peculiar position, in not standing proudly here by the King at this crisis. I consider all the imputations with which he has lately been assailed as ungenerous, unfair and utterly unfounded. This I am prepared to maintain, were against me the combination of British statesmen to which you allude, and should 'the well-beloved Brutus' himself join in the contest.

From Lord Palmerston

November 13, 1846.

I am sorry you object to the sending of this dispatch, which contains nothing, I think, that was not said by Lansdowne and myself in the two Houses of Parliament. The measure which Diedrichstein will have to announce

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to us on the part of Metternich is the entire extinction of the Free State of Cracow and its incorporation in the Austrian territory. He told me this yesterday; it is to be announced by a messenger whom he expects as the decision of the Conference of the Three Powers at Vienna. I confess it seems to me that with a view to our relations with Austria it would be far better that we should state our opinions as bearing upon a question which we may officially assume to be yet undecided, rather than that we should at once have to protest against a measure announced to us as taken. By the first course at least we gain time for the coming to some understanding about the Spanish question; by the latter course we are driven at once into argumentative conflict with Austria, or we must leave unnoticed a measure which in Parliament we could not defend ourselves for not protesting against. I think the delay you require will defeat the object you have in view.

From Lord Aberdeen

November 17, 1846.

Having been absent from home for two or three days, I did not receive your letter quite as early as I ought to have done. According to your desire, I have now sent it to Sir R. Peel for his perusal. You say that you do not ask for my opinion; but you express a hope that you have not misrepresented the feelings with which I first heard of the intended double marriage at Madrid. Undoubtedly, I received the intelligence of that marriage with the utmost surprise, and should have done so with an equal degree of indignation had I thought Guizot capable of an act of deliberate perfidy; but believing him to be as honest as myself, or as any publick man in England, I thought it no more than justice to wait for the requisite explanations. I am now fully disposed to believe that Guizot acted under a real apprehension of the intention of the British Government to promote the marriage of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg with the

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Queen. I have told him that I thought there was no foundation whatever for that apprehension, and that I felt quite certain of the British Government never having any intention of acting in contradiction to the engagement entered into at the Château d'Eu. I am not sufficiently informed of all the circumstances which have taken place to be able to say what degree of probability the suspicion entertained by Guizot may be found to possess ; but although unfounded I believe it to have been sincere. You may recollect that I told you, as I had already done Palmerston, of the extreme sensitiveness of the French Government respecting the pretensions of Prince Leopold. With every disposition to trust me, and certainly upon this subject they had good reason to do so, it was scarcely possible to prevent some fresh cause of serious alarm almost every month. A trifle therefore may have produced effects which you could not have anticipated.

There is one subject upon which, although not adverted to in your letter, I feel bound to give you my opinion. I think you wrong in your interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht. Were this not my opinion, it would have been my duty, on the first mention of the marriage by the King, to have urged an objection which in its nature would have been insuperable. I felt, however, that had I done so I should have committed a mistake myself, and have placed the Queen's Government in a false position. This is still very strongly my impression ; but the matter has been, and will be, much discussed ; and if I see reason on further information and reflection to change my opinion, I shall not be ashamed to do so, and to confess it. I will now conclude by expressing my deep regret at the present state of the relations of the two Governments. The cordial understanding which formerly existed is necessarily at an end ; and it will require much caution, prudence and temper to prevent that coolness which is now inevitable from degenerating into actual hostility. You are fully aware,

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I trust, that I am very far from feeling opposed to your Government ; and that towards yourself personally I entertain nothing but the most friendly feelings. You will perhaps recollect that, *as a Ministry of Peace*, I gave you reason to look for my humble support ; and although your position may now be rendered more difficult, I will hope that, *as such*, you may still expect it.

From Lord Palmerston

November 20, 1846.

Aberdeen is very charitable to Guizot ; I hope he will be equally so to us. He continues to believe Guizot honest and sincere, though he has broke his word. I trust he will not doubt our pacific disposition till we have actually broken the peace. As he does not explain the grounds on which he thinks the Treaty of Utrecht inapplicable to the case, one cannot judge of their validity.

From Lord Lansdowne

November 30, 1846.

I feel confident that the determination taken as to acting singly as well as promptly in the Cracow affair was quite right. It could not reasonably be expected we should enter the same boat with France after the recent experience of how little we could rely on the direction in which she would attempt to steer it ; and it is useful that she should see and feel the consequences of the situation in which she has placed herself. Still I could wish there was a little less of asperity of tone of vindictive feeling displayed in the *M. Chronicle* articles, which is unnecessary. I hope there will be more coolness and dignity in the language held, both in private and in publick, by Ministers.

From Lord Palmerston

December 8, 1846.

This letter from our Consul-General at Tangier does not give a very agreeable account of the relative position

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of English and French interests in Morocco ; but it does not point out any specific thing to be done except to authorise Hay to go up to the Moorish Court whenever he may have occasion to do so. I am afraid that Aberdeen's system of making himself Under-Secretary to Guizot has been injurious to British interests all over the world.

From Lord Normanby

Paris : January 9, 1847.

Charles Greville arrived here on Tuesday with your *petit mot*. I begin, therefore, by heartily reciprocating the good wishes of the season. It seemed to me on reading your letter almost as if you had fallen into the trap which Guizot has been setting to catch the Deputies upon their arrival from the country, by spreading before them the report that I was doing all in my power to upset him. He naturally wishes to remain in power, and he cunningly enough conceives that nothing would so much mend his chance of doing so as if he could persuade the French that there was an effort on the part of a foreigner to get rid of so national a minister as he is ; but I am at least equally alive to the fact that to appear in any way to excite or to encourage any change here would be a most sure method to impede such a result. I therefore very sincerely laugh at the idea industriously circulated by certain persons here that I could take any part in a plot to change the Government. But I cannot agree with you in going a step further and thinking that we should gain nothing by such a change. Surely it is something not to have to continue to discuss confidential affairs and opposing interests with a man who (as you justly remarked very early in this business) has been found to have no regard for his word.

From Lord Normanby

Paris : January 22, 1847.

I was very glad to see what you said the first night in the House about the Spanish question. It was, I think,

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quite the right line to take, and I agree in every word of it. But it was the only satisfactory incident which occurred in treating that portion of the Address. It is always unfortunate when the attack is irregular and the defence postponed. There is no denying that the tone taken by everyone but you was so much lower than was expected, or than was quite consistent with all our proceedings during the recess, that the effect here is to make them triumphant and to construe forbearance into weakness. There seems so much delay (perhaps unavoidable) in producing our Papers that I shall not be surprised if the opportunity is lost of having our case stated in the Chamber of Deputies, and if therefore judgment goes against us by default as much as in the Chamber of Peers. The fact is we have been a little too late in every stage of this business from the very first. But I only say this to you as there is no remedy for it now. I rejoiced to see that you corrected that absurd idea which some people have taken up that the Queen had had a personal interest in the Coburg Alliance.

From Lord Normanby

March 12, 1847.

You ask what Queen Christina is coming here for. I am afraid no good. I have written to-day to Palmerston a confidential dispatch calling your attention to what I believe to be the present intention of the French Government, namely, in a few weeks, after consultation with Austria and Prussia, to take some decided step with reference to Spanish affairs. The King's language within the last few days has been very extraordinary; but many circumstances may change all this before they are really prepared for action.

From Lord Normanby

April 17, 1847.

You will have been rather surprised to hear of the Duc de Broglie's nomination to London. The inter-

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pretation which all connected with the Government have put upon it when talking with me is that it is to be taken as the strongest proof of their great desire to restore a better understanding with us, and that with that view they send us the very first man, one who might be Minister any day he liked. I rather believe, though, that it is all done to serve a temporary purpose. He goes as Guizot's friend, to whom for many reasons the King could not possibly object, though he did not suggest or wish him. This strengthens his position with his colleagues, whom he, somewhat justly, suspects of an intention to reorganise the Government without him. This the support of a man like the Duc de Broglie as Ambassador in England would render more difficult. Should he answer this purpose *here* and not advance any other *there*, I think then he will be withdrawn when time shall be thought to have sufficiently whitewashed Bresson for him to be put forward again, and then I really think that he might do as well as any other they are likely to send. I do not know how de Broglie will get on with Palmerston, except that they are both gentlemen. I cannot conceive any two natures more different. Broglie is an obstinate and coxcombical pedant, who always exaggerates under opposition; but I do not believe, however bad his conduct may have been on this Spanish business, that he is systematically adverse to England. He is, as you know, no speechmaker, and a day or two after I first came here in the summer, in conversation he said to me, 'Pour moi l'alliance anglaise c'est la différence entre le bien et le mal.'

From Lord Normanby

July 29, 1847.

In Palmerston's absence from town I may as well say to you that there are one or two contingencies connected with foreign policies on which I hope before you separate you will make up your minds what line to take should they occur during the recess. We were surprised

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last year and lost some time in consequence, but we should not have the same fair excuse if this happened a second time. For instance, you say England will not hear of the Spanish Loan. I never thought you would or could but believe the whole to have been proposed with the intention of quarrelling with us upon our refusal. I have secret information, which I am inclined to believe, that the Spanish Government have been all the while intriguing with Narvaez, and that our refusal upon the subject of the Loan is to be the signal for their retirement and his return to Spain as their successor,

From Lord Palmerston

Broadlands : August 19, 1847.

The day before yesterday Lionel Rothschild called on me early to say that Bresson was arrived in London and wished much to see me. I said that if I had been staying in London I should willingly have received him, but that I was going off by railway to this place, had a great many things to do before I could start, and that I begged him therefore to make my excuses to Bresson. I said that Bresson and I could have nothing to say to each other or to discuss with each other, and that consequently my not seeing him could be of no importance, and that if, as I guessed, the real object of his visit to London was not to buy horses and carriages as he gave out but to feel his way to the Embassy, I could only say that it must strike everybody that for the French Govt. to send hither as Ambassador the living representative of the Montpensier Marriage would be a *mauvaise plaisanterie*. Perhaps Bresson may have been sent hither in order to worm something out of us which might help Guizot to guide himself in regard to the conduct of the intrigues which he is now carrying on in Spain, and if so, there is no harm in having kept Bresson at arm's length. Though if I had been in London I should of course have seen him.

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From Lord Palmerston

September 14, 1847.

My dispatch to Normanby instructing him to communicate to Guizot the two dispatches to Ponsonby about Italian affairs is not quite so warm as you proposed. But both the Prince and I felt that the French take such advantage of everything, and catch so at the merest trifles, that if we were to say anything that looked like the expression of a strong wish or anxiety for their co-operation about Italy they would say, 'See here is the English Government pretending to be angry with us about Spain, but compelled to come and ask us for help the very first time that any event of any importance happens in any part of Europe; it is clear that they cannot do without us, and therefore we may take any liberties with them that we like, either in Spain or elsewhere.' I send you some private letters from Bulwer. He is very pressing for some step in advance to meet Salamanca about Tariff Reductions. Would it be possible to hold out any expectation of some diminution in the duty on wines? Of course this could not be confined to Spanish wines, but it might help Salamanca in recovering duties on things which we send into Spain. What Bulwer says is quite true. A trade carried on by smugglers is an element of hostility; a trade carried on by Custom Houses is an element of friendship. We have beat the French at Madrid at present, and I hope we may keep the lead we have taken. We have luckily the Queen of Spain with us, and she seems a woman of high courage and strong determination. But her marriage must be dissolved, for till that is done she is on the brink of a precipice with her mother and uncle striving every day to push her down.

From Lord Palmerston

May 9, 1848.

I quite agree with you that if at any future time the Spanish Government should apply to us for assistance

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under the Quadruple Treaty, we should be entitled to take into consideration any neglect or rejection of advice from us, by the adoption of which the danger against which assistance was demanded might have been avoided. I should doubt the expediency of making any declaration on this point either in debate in Parliament or by official note to the Spanish Government, because on the one hand it might be argued that a treaty engagement between the Crown of England and the Crown of Spain cannot properly be annulled by any act of folly or rudeness on the part of Ministers who may for the moment be in power in Spain ; and on the other hand it might be said that such an announcement on our part that we consider the treaty no longer binding would tend to encourage the Carlists and light up civil war in Spain.

From Lord Palmerston

May 9, 1848.

I forgot in my other note to advert to the Montpensier marriage. I have, as you suggested, desired Bulwer in a private letter to lie quite still for the present as to the Montpensier question. But it would hardly do for us to assume that events evidently of a temporary character in France have entirely altered the bearings of a question which never could be considered as a question of to-day nor of this year, but the importance of which had its existence in the future and in duration of time. No man can say what the Government of France will be five years hence, and no man can safely predict that by that time we may not have one of the Orleans Princes on the throne of France ; but, whether France shall remain a Republic or shall again become a Monarchy, it seems manifest that with a French Prince on the throne of Spain there would come in French influence and French political connection, and more or less all the evils and inconveniences which the Spanish marriages were thought calculated to produce.

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From Lord Palmerston

May 22, 1848.

Isturitz has just been with me to show me a dispatch from Sotomayor of the 17th, enclosing copy of a note of that day to Bulwer, sending him his Rapports and desiring him to quit Madrid in forty-eight hours. The grounds on which this step is taken are that there had been an insurrection in Seville headed by a person who was known to have been a personal friend of Bulwer; that Bulwer's general conduct was disagreeable to the Spanish Government, to the press at Madrid, to the garrison of that town, and to the Spanish Nation at large, and had been condemned by the London newspapers, by speakers in Parliament and by members of the English Government. General Mirasol is to be sent to give explanations, and to prove that this proceeding is a fresh proof of the desire of the Spanish Government to be upon the most friendly terms with the Government of Great Britain. As the Spanish note was dated the 17th, and was probably sent to Bulwer in the course of that day, Bulwer will hardly have been able to send off a messenger till the next day, the 18th, and as Isturitz received his dispatches of the 17th this morning, we can scarcely expect to hear from Bulwer till to-morrow afternoon. They seem to have done an offensive thing in an offensive manner. I told Isturitz I could say nothing to him on the subject, but would make his communication known to my colleagues.

From Lord Palmerston

May 30, 1848.

I have received this note from Isturitz and the accompanying Memorandum from Eddisburg as to the time when it reached the office. *Of course* Baillie's question about it yesterday was wholly unconnected with any knowledge he had obtained that it was about to be written. You will see that all the charges so loudly announced by sound of trumpet reduce themselves to

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this one, that the people of Madrid, as asserted by the Spanish Government, believed that the officer who commanded the troops who revolted at Seville had obtained his appointment at the recommendation of Bulwer. The Spanish Government are shut out from all former complaints by having withdrawn the application for Bulwer's recall the other day. I will, when you return me the note, prepare for your consideration a draft of answer. If the people of Madrid thought that Bulwer had sufficient influence with the Spanish Government to obtain military commands for his friends, his public position towards that Government must have been considered by the people of Madrid as being friendly and intimate and not as being hostile. And what must be the understood custom of a place as to the interference of Foreign Ministers in the internal affairs of the country, when the Government itself justifies an act by alleging that it was the general opinion of the town that it had consulted or yielded to the wishes of a Foreign Minister as to the selection of a military officer for an important military command?

From Lord Palmerston

May 31, 1848.

I have just received your note. I do not see how we can change our course now in regard to insisting upon written communications; and Peel said to Bulwer that he thought we ought to require to have the Spanish statements in writing. I think it is very important that we should not be liable to have it said that serious charges had been made in conversation which we had not stated to Parliament, and that therefore Parliament had not before them the whole of the case of which we have a knowledge. Such a state of the matter might be very convenient to Sotomayor and Narvaez and Isturitz and Bankes and Stanley and Guizot and Louis Philippe, but it seems to me to be a predicament which we ought pertinaciously to avoid.

THE SPANISH MARRIAGES

From Lord Palmerston

December 12, 1846.

I send you a letter from the King of Portugal which the Queen has sent me to read. It shows how completely the Dietz clique have got hold of his mind ; it is plain that he dislikes in his heart, and distrusts even the arrival of, Wylde sent from the Court itself more than by the Government here. It is amazing also to see how coolly the Constitutional Sovereign talks of the banishing by order of the Queen one of the first nobles of the country because the Court chose to think his presence might be inconvenient to them, and without any shadow of credible accusation against him.

From Lord Palmerston

December 14, 1846.

I send you two notes from the Queen. I have told Her in answer that the British agents should certainly hold no unnecessary intercourse with the revolted, but that it would not be expedient to interdict all communication, because it is to be recollected that it was owing to a communication which Southern had with some of the leaders that they abstained from proclaiming the regency of Pedro 5th ; and this was no small advantage to the Queen. Besides many occasions may possibly happen in which it may be very useful for the Queen that there should be some Third Party to serve as organ of communication between the two Portuguese Parties mutually exasperated against each other. . . . The Queen seems hard upon Palmella, who, though not an Angel of Purity, is not on the other hand a Demon of Disorder. His banishment seems to me much about the same as if our Queen had ordered the Duke of Richmond to travel lest he should be petted by the Free Traders, or lest he should cabal with the Protectionists. It is simply copying the Czar sending his nobles to Siberia.

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From Lord Palmerston

January 28, 1847.

The accompanying letters will explain themselves ; but I think the Prince takes a somewhat strained view of mine to Wylde. Mensdorf is returned from Lisbon, and was at Windsor, and the Queen and King of Portugal have written to our Queen and Prince Albert. What the Portuguese Court and Government want is that we should make to the Junta a Declaration in the Austrian or Prussian fashion that we disapprove their proceedings and bid them surrender. Now this I conceive would be to erect ourselves into judges between the Queen and her people ; and if we do so we must hear both sides and give judgment according to our view of right. The Prince forgets that he himself in the beginning of the matter felt and expressed strongly to me in a letter his disapprobation of the proceeding by which the Queen dismissed her former Government.

From Lord Palmerston

August 31, 1847.

I have received this letter to-day from Leopold. It seems to me that it would be best to discourage this confidential mission of his. . . . The real fact I believe to be that most of the mischief of late years has been caused by the injudicious meddling of Leopold, by the bad advice which he has given, and by the support which he afforded to the Cabals and to Dietz.

To Lord Palmerston

June 18, 1848.

I think, after every consideration given to the subject, that it is necessary to draw up an instruction to Sir H. Seymour to take no part in the struggle of parties, and to refrain from any interference with respect to which he has not specific directions from the Government. I think, as I wrote to you yesterday, that if we were to make any

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communication to the Portuguese Government, it should rather be in a tone of commendation than of reproach. They have not suspended the Cortes ; they have not imprisoned or banished the Deputies ; they have not suspended the guarantees for personal liberty, and they *have* introduced a more liberal electoral law. Surely this is not a time, if ever there is one, in which it can be proper for our Minister to communicate confidentially with parties endeavouring to overthrow the existing administration. Our Ministers abroad have credentials to the Sovereigns, and are by their permission entitled to certain privileges and immunities. It is quite consistent with such a position that our Ministers should endeavour to open the eyes of the Sovereign or his Ministers to any dangers which they may be running into from obstinacy or error. But it is not consistent with it that we should authorise or permit any participation in the efforts of parties who are seeking to overthrow a Ministry having the confidence of the Crown. Such conduct would be unfriendly and unfair to the foreign Sovereign, impolitic and perilous as regards ourselves. I hope, therefore, you will frame such a note as I have here indicated.

CHAPTER VI

THE IRISH FAMINE

A FAR more anxious and difficult problem than the Spanish marriages confronted Lord John nearer home, for within a few weeks of his accession to office Ireland was in the grip of the most terrible famine that she had ever known. The new Viceroy, Lord Bessborough, himself an Irish landlord, had not been long in office before he urgently pleaded for new powers for dealing with crime. Though Peel had been defeated on the Irish Arms Bill, Lord John reluctantly consented to support his demand; but the party was opposed to coercion, and the Bill was withdrawn after the second reading. The whole attention of the Viceroy and Labouchere, the Chief Secretary, was now concentrated on combating the famine. The population had almost doubled since the Union, but the food production had not kept pace. Half the potato crop of 1845 had been lost by blight; but the almost total ruin of the crop in 1846 brought the people, three-quarters of whom depended for their life on the potato, within sight of wholesale starvation. Corn was available, but they were too poor to buy it. To cope with the distress in 1845, Peel had organised public works, the cost to be equally shared by the locality and the State. The Labour Rate Act of the new Ministry, on the other hand, financed the relief works by Treasury loans, to be repaid by the 'Barony' or Petty Sessions in better times. Parliament was then prorogued on August 28, and, despite clamant

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demands for an autumn session to deal with the crisis, did not reassemble before the usual date in 1847.

The Prime Minister's injunction to Bessborough, 'Write constantly,' was loyally obeyed. The immense number and length of the letters which passed between Dublin and London prove beyond a doubt that the Prime Minister, no less than Bessborough and Labouchere, gave his best thought and his utmost effort to the mitigation of the overwhelming calamity, the prevention of administrative abuses, and the preservation of public order. The verdict of 'Wilful murder against Lord John Russell' repeatedly brought at inquests on the victims of starvation was the result of ignorance. Hundreds of thousands of lives were saved by the Government of which he was the head. Relief works, not in all cases wisely planned, but on a scale never before known, were set on foot, and at the opening of 1847 600,000 persons were receiving aid. If the Prime Minister declined to adopt all the proposals that were made to him, such as Lord Bessborough's plan to employ the people on the improvement of private property, it was because he was resolved not to aggravate the situation by short-sighted palliatives. In this determination he was confirmed by frequent exhortations from Charles Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Throughout the winter he received valued advice from his veteran colleague, Lansdowne, himself an Irish landlord.

When Parliament met in January, 1847, the crisis was at its height. After explaining the measures that had been taken, Lord John carried the suspension of the remaining duties on corn and of the clauses of the Navigation Acts which prevented importation in foreign vessels. Ireland was divided up under relief committees; the Poor Law was modified to enable out-relief to be

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given to able-bodied applicants ; the sale of encumbered estates was to be facilitated, and emigration to be assisted. The programme met with general approval in England. Lord George Bentinck urged that labour should be employed on railways rather than on roads and drainage ; but Lord John pointed out that only a quarter of the sum devoted to such a purpose would be spent on the unskilled labour which was in need of immediate help.

Yet the results of all the energy and goodwill proved disappointing.¹ The mortality was appalling, and the efforts of the Government were overlooked or forgotten in the agony of the people. A catastrophe of unparalleled magnitude suddenly fell on a community exceptionally ill-fitted both by circumstances and temperament to meet it. The Devon Commission, which was appointed in 1843 and reported in 1845, had described the evils of the Irish land system, but had no suggestions for their radical cure, and Peel left office before he had time to deal with the situation. While grappling with the grim spectre of starvation, Lord John's letters reveal his constant pre-occupation with the lessons of the famine and with the means of emancipating the peasantry from the slavish dependence on a single and precarious crop. In a problem of such magnitude some mistakes were inevitable. The Navigation Act, for instance, should have been suspended in 1846 instead of 1847. But no body of men could have worked with greater courage and zeal. When Lord Bessborough, worn out by his exertions and anxieties, died in May, 1847, he was succeeded by Lord Clarendon, one of the ablest members of the Cabinet, under whom the Government proceeded with remedial legislation suggested by the Great Hunger.

¹ See Dr. George O'Brien, *The Economic History of Ireland from the Union to the Famine*, 222-80.

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From Richard Lalor Sheil

June 20, 1846.

I shall feel most obliged to you for *any* office in your Government which you may have the goodness to offer me.¹ But I think it right, with the frankness which I am sure you will commend, to say that I have heard that Labouchere is not to be Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, as was originally proposed, and that you mean to appoint some Irish member (none being as yet fixed upon) to that office. In that case, I trust that you will bear in mind that my exertions for the party have been, whenever I was able to attend in Parliament, most unremitting, and that I have occasionally the good fortune to obtain the attention of the House of Commons. If it be thought unwise to present me to the office in question, you will perhaps conceive it to be just to nominate me to one of equal position and authority in this country. I own that I should feel a little mortified if any *Irish* member were placed in an office higher than that which it may be your intention to offer me. Perhaps I am greatly overrating my pretensions, upon which you must be far better qualified to decide than I can possibly be.

From Daniel O'Connell

Dublin: August 12, 1846.

It is a painful, but most pressing duty upon me, as representative of the County of Cork, to call the attention (which I respectfully do) of Her Majesty's Government to the frightful state of famine by which the people of that County are, not merely menaced, but actually engulfed. I do assure you, My Lord, that there is the greatest danger of outbreaks in various parts of the County of Cork of the population, driven to despair from want of food. I respectfully submit that the forms

¹ Dramatist, orator, lawyer, lieutenant of O'Connell. He was now appointed Master of the Mint, and died in 1851 at Florence, soon after taking up his post as Minister at the Court of Tuscany.

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of the law and of constitutional guarantees must yield to the pressure of a death-dealing famine. And I also submit whether Her Majesty's Government may not feel at such an awful crisis it right to consider whether Parliament might not, either by a Vote or by a short Bill, confer upon the Government extraordinary powers of directing, *without any delay*, the execution of works of public utility and of supplying the immediate means of paying the wages of the labourers employed at such works. Nothing but the fearful state of my County could justify me in this urgency. I feel convinced that due attention will be paid to the merits (if any they have) of my suggestion.

To Lord Bessborough

September 1, 1846.

I read with great concern your letter to George Grey yesterday. You must exercise your power of calling together presentment sessions, but endeavour to do so after consulting the resident gentlemen of the county or district. In some cases a public work of utility may afford relief; in others you can only order work as a test of destitution in the same way that out-door relief is given here in times of distress. And in these cases three or five parishes combined are better suited to the wants of the people than baronies or larger districts. The wages given for work should not be unreasonable either way. It must be remembered that the wages hitherto given by farmers were in addition to the stock of potatoes grown by the cotter; now he must subsist on wages alone. You should have a sufficiency of troops and police in any county that seems growing into disturbance. G. Grey will send the regiments when you want them. The priests will, I feel confident, do all in their power to induce the people to be tranquil. You should make more use of the Poor Law than was done last year. The work-houses should be full when out-door relief is given. This was the case at Nottingham and elsewhere in times

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of distress. I wish to know the present composition of your relief committee at Dublin. I think five members are sufficient for a good working committee.

From Charles Wood

September 22, 1846.

The more I hear and see, the more impressed I am with the conviction that we have hardly yet appreciated the state of things present and future in that country, and we shall need iron nerves to go through with it. I see that they talk of summoning Parliament in the autumn. I am inclined to think that the Irish gentlemen will do more good on their estates. If Parliament is sitting they will have good reason for their absence and an easy mode of carrying on their favourite measure of asking for more. Lord Bessborough and Labouchere have suggested several alterations in the instructions to the Relief Committees. I have acceded to them all, for I think it very essential that there should be no difference of language between the Treasury and the Irish Government. This was the case last spring and was very mischievous.

*From H. Labouchere*¹

Phoenix Park : September 24, 1846.

The prospects we have before us have given me so much anxiety that I cannot help writing a few lines to you about them, although I know that Lord Bessborough has been in constant communication with you. It is now plain that unusual efforts of the most extensive kind must be made to save the people from famine. Parliament has determined that the exertions and sacrifices necessary for this purpose must fall upon the Landed Property of Ireland with the assistance in a particular form of the State, and in this principle it seems to me

¹ Chief Secretary ; President of the Board of Trade, 1839-41 ; created Lord Taunton, 1859.

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that there is a general acquiescence. I should be of opinion not only that the principle was perfectly met, but that the mode in which it is proposed to carry it out was safe and salutary under everything like ordinary circumstances. The necessity for contributing to a labour rate for comparatively useless purposes would stimulate landowners to employ the people more beneficially on their own estates. It would act, in short, pretty much as the Poor Law does in an English Parish. But the immense scale of the operations which will be required during the next ten months, the sudden return of the crisis, the poverty, mutual distrust, and want of habits of co-operation which distinguish Irish resident landlords too frequently, besides the number who are absentees, make me fear that the result will be very different, and that private employment will not be stimulated but crushed. If this is the case, the land will be mortgaged for a vast expenditure that will yield no profitable return, and either the debt must be relinquished or general ruin will ensue. The language I hear every day around me comes to this—we acknowledge that we ought to support the poor under this calamity, and are willing to do so, but do not subject us to the injustice and mortification of seeing our money wasted and our people demoralised when we are willing to give them employment on our estates in a manner that will be advantageous both to them and to us. What is asked is—not that it shall be in the power of any proprietor who supports his own poor to claim exemption from bearing any further share of the general burthen, which would, I think, be manifestly inadmissible—but that the contribution which each should have to pay should if he pleases be spent upon his own land in a useful manner, perhaps requiring some extra payment from him besides. I admit the difficulties of making such an arrangement, but I do not think it would be impossible, and I am certainly alarmed at the prospect of seeing vast multitudes of labourers throughout Ireland employed in gangs which cannot be

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well regulated, in labour comparatively useless, for a great length of time. It is true that the system I have proposed would as a permanent one be intolerable, but so in truth would be the one which is now coming into operation. Neither can be justified for a moment except under the pressure of the most urgent necessity.

To Lord Bessborough

October 4, 1846.

. . . Now as to the future. You have got all the power you can fairly have. 'Public works' are any works which can be of public advantage. 'Drainage' comprehends every process which is necessary for drainage. Under the first head all the earthwork for railroads may be made, the baronies being assessed for the cost. Under the second, lands may be divided and thoroughly drained, and streams turned to a profitable account. I hope you will not allow the officers of the Board of Works to give way about task work. And now, having these powers attributed to you, I am quite willing to go on till January without a meeting of Parliament. Provided you can bring Ireland through this crisis, I think Parliament will indemnify us. But if we fail we shall have no mercy shown us. Father Mathew says the feeling of the peasantry is one of 'sullen desperation.' The law must be upheld. I ordered two regiments to be sent to you yesterday. I trust they may be enough. But you shall not want power either to give relief or enforce the law.

From Lord Bessborough

October 6, 1846.

I am sorry to receive a very long letter from you to-day, because it makes me feel that we do not understand each other. I neither intended to convey censure or rebuke to you or the Government by anything I have said, and if there has been any blame it is my own in not having at once gone over to England, which I thought

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of doing, to explain to you and the Cabinet the great alteration that had taken place in the state of Ireland between the time of the passing of the Bill and the execution of it. The fear of creating alarm and the bother of appointing Lords Justices made me determine to write, and I am now very sorry that I did so. I have the fullest confidence in you and that you wish to do all that is right, and I would not have attempted to shake you in your opinion if I had not thought the situation of this country most critical and that some alteration of the law was necessary to give an inducement to the landowners and those below them to act together in finding employment for those that are destitute. I have no fear of carrying this into effect if the price of provisions does not thwart me, but the increasing price and the avarice of the merchants in hoarding their corn gives me great uneasiness. I suggested the employment by task or piece-work whenever practicable, and you may be sure that I will not give way upon it. I am glad that you agree with me that if possible Parliament had better not meet if we can in any way carry the country through the difficulty in which it is at present placed. I am well aware that Scotland through its members will complain, but I cannot acquiesce in the opinion that the two countries can be compared at the present moment. In Scotland there will be great distress for the want of potatoes, but its population have always been accustomed to other articles of food. In Ireland potatoes have been the sole food, and I am confident that a very large portion of the people have never had any other food in their mouth. That article of food is daily failing, and I verily believe that by Christmas there will not be a sound potato in the country. You must recollect, therefore, that in Ireland it is not only the actual want of food to the individual but a total disorganisation of society. The man that holds six or seven acres and under has to feed himself and family, the pig which pays his rent and the conacre which he has hired—all this has failed at once,

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and he is subjected to the chance of famine, pressure from his landlord, and proceedings against him by a prosecuting middle man for refusing to dig up the conacre in which the potatoes *are not* and for which he cannot consequently pay his rent.

To Lord Bessborough

October 11, 1846.

I am glad that your accounts are better. I hope, as you said, that by the beginning of January all will be working well. But I am sorry to hear that there are complaints of the price of Indian corn at £14 a ton. That is exactly three halfpence a pound, or sixpence for four pounds. I believe four pounds will give sufficient food to a man and his wife and two children. When we know that at the lowest times it was a penny a pound, I fear we have not by any means seen the highest price. It must be thoroughly understood that we cannot feed the people. It were a cruel delusion to pretend to do so. We can at best keep down prices where there is no regular market or established dealers from rising much beyond the fair price with ordinary profits.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 11, 1846.

If the Irish labourers attempt, as I fear they will, to obtain good wages, little labour, and a low price of food, they must be resisted, and all such expectations should be crushed. The common delusion that Government can convert a period of scarcity into a period of abundance is one of the most mischievous that can be entertained. But, alas! the Irish have been taught many bad lessons and few good ones.

From Lord Lansdowne

October 13, 1846.

I shall be much obliged to you for any letters that are at all material that you can send me as the season

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advances, for the subject is deeply interesting to me in every way, and I shall be anxious as a proprietor to second as far as I can the views of the Government. I had already engaged in one considerable plan of drainage. I shall now prepare for another. Nothing can be more unreasonable, as you say, than the expectations of the people, who will seldom do anything to assist the Government, yet reckon upon the Government doing everything to assist them.

From Charles Wood

October 14, 1846.

I quite agree with you that we must interfere as little as we can with Bessborough's discretion, for it is only fair to him that he should have the power of working his scheme out. My object in wishing you to write to him was to remind him of the limitation to drainage and works connected with it, on which the Cabinet decided on your own suggestion ; lest with his sweeping notions, of erasing the word ' public,' he might have been undertaking building farmhouses, or some work which we could not have sanctioned. You draw a pleasing picture of the effects of Bessbro's government, and so far nothing can have succeeded better. I cannot, however, help being apprehensive that we have hitherto seen only the favourable side. Peel's government of grants, advances, and Indian meal was very popular in Ireland. Our government of *more* advances, *more* meal, further boons to Irish proprietors, and a better state of things for the people, in spite of the famine, than they have enjoyed for years, is popular too. I hope that your Government is popular for other reasons also, but, depend upon it, this goes a long way. What we are doing now is easy enough, advancing money out of a full exchequer, and improving everybody's situation in Ireland by doing so. Peel said to me that he felt the danger of the course which he had adopted ; that if persisted in it was most

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serious, and that it was hard upon us having to withdraw. So far we are only getting deeper into a state of things, and hence to retrace our steps, and return to the principles on which the affairs of the world are ordinarily carried on, will be no light task for those who have to undertake it. I doubt whether even Bessborough will be so popular when he comes to enforce the repayment of the instalments.

From Lord Lansdowne

October 15, 1846.

I trust you will keep yourself open on the important question your letter raises. Indeed I have been able to think of nothing else since I received it, and tho' I shall in the meantime give it all the re-consideration I can, I must say that as at present advised the inconvenience and the danger of a meeting seems to me greatly to preponderate over the advantages, which are after all more of form than of substance. What in ordinary times might savour too much of absolutism and confidence is popular in a crisis like this, and publick opinion will support you in stretching the powers of the acts as far as a case can be made out for it. It will be impossible to judge of the effects of the measures of the Irish Government in the course of a few weeks, and if you amend your acts now, you will probably have to amend them again after Xmas, which will be anything but creditable ; but the strangest justification of all towards the publick and Parliament for not calling it together will consist in its being obviously unfit and unsatisfactory to legislate for Ireland in the absence of the Irish Members, and detrimental to the execution of all the arrangements now depending to bring them (or at least such of them as are good for anything) over. I see O'Connell takes this view now, and Bessborough, from whom I have received a few lines this morning, says, 'Everything will get right if we have not a meeting of Parliament, but I dread one before our measures are in operation.'

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To Charles Wood

October 15, 1846.

The only fault I ever find with your reasonings about Ireland is that you treat the destruction of £10,000,000 of food as if it were an ordinary calamity. It is but too evident that if we were not to interfere Ireland would be the prey of cut-throats and incendiaries at this moment. The future is no doubt perilous. But if there is capital in Ireland, as I believe there is, the country will be made to produce food for eight millions of Irish and four millions of English in a few years. I wish to have a Cabinet on the morning of the 28th to consider whether we ought to summon Parliament and suspend all duties on food till October, 1847. The inclination of my mind is that we ought to do so.

To Lord Bessborough

October 15, 1846.

It must be proclaimed from the Castle and in the cottage that Government will not be answerable for the price of food. We must call on the proprietors to buy food in the country, if they wish the labourers to be enabled to get corn and flour at a moderate price, and re-sell it at a somewhat lower price than they give for it. But while we cannot perform this impossible task, we are responsible for the freedom of trade and the protection of life. I shall not be disposed to think you too arbitrary for patrolling any district which is disturbed by riot or outrage. You are the best judge whether you can accomplish this by means of the regular cavalry. I should say that a mounted police force, such as we used to have in the neighbourhood of London, would be very useful. Indeed I am persuaded you will come to it at last. I am not at all convinced that we shall be able to stave off a meeting of Parliament in November. I am aware of all the inconveniences of it, but perhaps by having a month before Xmas we may save at least a month afterwards.

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From Charles Wood

October 16, 1846.

You must not think that I am insensible to the state of Ireland or the necessity of Government interference to an extraordinary degree. But I cannot shut my eyes to the gross exaggeration of everything in that country, of the state of destitution as compared with other years, of the failure of *all* supply of food from the potato up to the present time, and of the universal disposition to do as little for themselves, and to throw as much upon the Government as possible. I am only anxious to guard against our being led away by this into doing more than is needful. The future is, as you say, perilous enough. I only wish not to aggravate that peril by our own conduct.

To the Duke of Leinster

October 17, 1846.

The Royal Agricultural Society, of which you are the head, sent a deputation not long ago to the Lord Lieutenant, representing that, instead of public works of an unprofitable nature, the Baronies should have power to undertake works of a useful and profitable nature. It had been our hope and expectation that landed proprietors would have commenced works of drainage and other improvements on their own account, thus employing the people on their own estates and rendering the land more productive for the future. In that case it would only have been the surplus labour which would have been employed on roads and other works not immediately profitable. The act, however, was put in operation in the Baronies in a spirit the reverse of that which I have described. It was taken for granted that the public works were the chief object to be regarded, and proprietors began to calculate that as so large a sum was to be repaid from their estates they should not be able to commence or even to continue private enterprises for the improvement of their own lands. When the

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case was brought before the Government by the Lord Lieutenant, we lamented the wrong direction in which the act had been turned ; but, admitting the necessity of the case and anxious to obtain the willing co-operation of the landlords, we authorised the Lord Lieutenant to deviate from the letter of the law, and gave our sanction to advances for useful and profitable works of a private nature.

After having incurred this responsibility, I am sorry to see that in several parts of Ireland calls are made upon the Government to undertake and perform tasks which are beyond the power and apart from the duties of Government. For instance, it seems to be expected that we should not only pay at an unusual rate of wages, but that we should maintain in this time of scarcity the usual price of food. A moment's thought will show that this is impossible. A smaller quantity of food is to be divided among the same number of human beings. It must be scarcer—it must be dearer. Any attempt to feed one class of the United Kingdom by the Government would, if successful, starve another part—would feed the producers of potatoes which had failed by starving the producers of wheat, barley, and oats, which had not failed. All that we have undertaken with respect to food, therefore, is to endeavour to create a provision trade at fair mercantile prices where no provision trade has hitherto existed, and where without assistance none might be willing to undertake a new and unpopular occupation. But that which is not possible for a Government is possible by individual and social exertion. Everyone who travels through Ireland observes the large stacks of corn which are the produce of the late harvest. There is nothing to prevent the purchase of grain by proprietors or by committees, and the disposal of these supplies in shops furnished on purpose with flour at a fair price with a moderate profit. This has been done, I am assured, in parts of the Highlands of Scotland, where the failure of the potatoes has been as great and as

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severe a calamity as it has been in Ireland. There is no doubt some inconvenience attending even these modes of interference with the market price of food. But the good overbalances the evil. Local committees or agents of landowners can ascertain the pressure of distress, measure the wants of a district and prevent waste or misapplication. Besides the general effect is to bring men together and induce them to exert their energy in a social effort directed to one spot; whereas the interference of the State deadens private energy, prevents forethought and after superseding all other exertion finds itself at last unequal to the gigantic task it has undertaken.

There are other questions, however, extending beyond the exigency of the day which it seems to me demand the attention of the landed proprietors of Ireland much more than that of the Government. It has been calculated that one-fifth of the cultivated land in Ireland has hitherto produced potatoes. After the present lamentable failure what course is to be taken? Some men of science deem that the potato can no longer be relied upon as an article of food; others say that time may remove the disease. It is clear, however, that potatoes cannot be relied upon as they have been hitherto. A cottier cannot hope to be able to pay a large rent for an acre, and the farmer cannot hope to obtain the cottier's labour by allowing him land for potatoes which may probably fail. It is therefore a most important question for the people of Ireland in what manner the deficiency in food is in future to be supplied. The nature of the grain or root which is best adapted for this purpose, the course of husbandry which ought to be followed, the means of procuring seed—all these are important problems to which the attention of the Agricultural Society cannot be too soon directed. One thing is certain. In order to enable Ireland to maintain her population, her agriculture must be greatly improved. Cattle, corn, poultry, eggs, butter and salt provisions have been and will

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probably continue to be her chief articles of export. But beyond the food exchanged for clothing and colonial products, she will require in future a large supply of food of her own growth or produce which the labourer should be able to buy with his wages.

From Lord Lansdowne

October 18, 1846.

Is it to be expected that the supplies known to be on their way to this country will be sufficient in the course of a few weeks to give a downward turn to the market prices which have lately been upon the rise? Is it probable that the difference between open ports and the low duty will practically bring many quarters of grain into the country which would not have been imported under the latter? If neither of these questions can be answered in the affirmative, the ports ought clearly to be opened. If so, by what authority is indeed a grave consideration. My sense of the evil of an immediate meeting of Parliament is so strong that my present inclination would be to say, on the authority of the Government, acting fearlessly on its own responsibility; but this would certainly be a matter for anxious deliberation.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 22, 1846.

I have consulted the best informants within my reach upon your two questions. 1. There is no reason to suppose that the importations expected will lower prices, although they may prevent any considerable rise. 2. It is impossible to say accurately how great a stimulus may be afforded to importation by reducing to 1*d.* or 0 the duties on wheat and other corn. But it is certain that 4*d.* is a fair average profit on the importation of a quarter of wheat. It is also certain that at Havre and Antwerp there is no duty at one, and only 7*d.* or 9*d.* at the other. So that the 4*d.* is a disadvantage imposed by law on the importers of food into this country. I have consulted

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the Chancellor and Palmerston on the meeting of Parliament, and they both say that, however inconvenient, there is no constitutional grounds or *quotable* precedent for not assembling Parliament when the corn laws are to be revised. I am happy to find that, as the presentments in Ireland go on, people are getting more into the way of working the law and Bessborough's Ukase with regularity. In many parts the labourers with tickets have not come to the Works, I suppose, not being in need, and reserving their tickets for a worse season.

To Lord Bessborough

October 22, 1846.

It is a very serious question whether either official or private persons should interfere with the planting of potatoes. The science of botany is quite at fault on the subject. The potato crop which failed last year in Belgium is this year a fair crop. The Danish botanists think the disease is like cholera, and will disappear in time. In this state of things advice is very dangerous.

From H. Labouchere

Dublin Castle : November 6, 1846.

I found things here pretty much as I left them. Outrages are increasing, but the people are becoming reconciled to task work. I have no doubt of the severity or extent of the destitution, nor of the magnitude of the jobbery and imposition which go on simultaneously with it. All this makes the task of Government very difficult, and we cannot relieve intolerable distress without at the same time being often cheated.

From Lord Bessborough

November 9, 1846.

All the accounts that I receive from the country confirm me in the opinion that I was right in stopping the works whenever the people for whom the employment was provided abused or maltreated the officers on account

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of their objection to task work, although I am aware that in the opinion of some people I subjected myself to the danger of an outbreak and ran some risk of a conflict. Perhaps in England you may have thought I was a little obstinate upon it. I felt sure, however, that I was right, and the result has proved it, as I am happy to say that in all the disturbed districts but one they are beginning to work cheerfully and find now that they can earn good wages by task.

From H. Labouchere

November 11, 1846.

You may rely on our being as vigorous as you can wish in repressing disorder upon its first appearance by every means in our power. We have done so in the disturbed parts of Clare, and the result has been most fortunate and has produced a feeling of confidence both in that county and in Limerick. The people are fast becoming reconciled to task work, and indeed they are able to earn so much in that way that the danger is that it will tend to make them averse to all other ways of earning a livelihood. The greatest abuses are mixed up with the greatest misery, and the existence of the one must not make you doubt of the reality of the other. The farmers are bringing their produce to market everywhere.

To Lord Bessborough

November 13, 1846.

They say we are too distant from Ireland to govern that country, and it appears that you are too distant from England to know what goes on here. Happily we have had a good deal of discussion in the cabinet, for matters settled without discussion are seldom well settled, but we have always arrived at a unanimous decision. I am very well pleased with all the decisions we have made. Some do not quite like your way of going on, but they only grumble a little at your popular proceedings. I am well satisfied that all the blame should be given to us,

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and all the praise go to you. That at least is going half way to support Government, and I suppose few persons would expect you to remain Viceroy under Peel or Stanley.

To Lord Bessborough

December 1, 1846.

The accounts from Ireland to-day are very unsatisfactory. The relief works appear to be resorted to by persons who have good means of livelihood, and to be refused to many who are starving. The Board of Works wish to stop this abuse, and, if they find it possible to do, I am sure they ought to have your support. But it is evidently very difficult and very invidious for officers of the Board of Works to select from the applicants for work.

From Charles Wood

December 2, 1846.

. . . What has brought them, in great measure at least, to their present state of helplessness? Their habit of depending on Government. What are we trying to do now? To force them upon their own resources. Of course they mismanage matters very much; and equally, of course, there are various evil consequences arising from their mismanagement. Are we then at once to revert to the old system and take upon ourselves the management of all their concerns? If so, the last state of her affairs will be worse than the first; and the seven devils will remain *in secula seculorum*. I have very little hope of the relief committees behaving honestly so long as they have no interest in so doing. That is the evil of *their*, in point of fact, spending *our* money; and till we can force upon them a self-interest in preventing this abuse, we must be prepared for its continuance. If we are to select the destitute, pay them, feed them, and find money from hence, we shall have the whole population of Ireland upon us soon enough. It is tending very fast to that already, and we must beware of undertaking

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further responsibility. If we undertake this as you propose, how are we to justify ourselves, if any *one person* is *starved*? It is now the business of the relief committees to ascertain destitution, and to recommend for employment. Can this be undertaken by an officer of the Board of Works? Clearly not; and then what a responsibility we assume, which we clearly cannot possibly discharge, of seeking out the destitute and relieving them. Let us do all we can to improve the local machinery, but for God's sake do nothing so fatal as to attempt to put it aside. All that we have been aiming at ever since we undertook the task is to work through Irishmen in their respective capacities and situations. I am convinced it is the right, it is the *only* course from which permanent good can arise to Ireland. We cannot expect that we shall find the machinery go smooth at first, that we shall not be thwarted at every turn, and we must submit to a good deal of this in many ways; but we shall succeed in the end. It will not be for many a long month or many a long year perhaps that we shall get the people in that country to do their duty decently; but assuredly we shall wilfully postpone that time if we do not, under such inducement as they now have to exert themselves, encourage and compel them to do their best.

To Lord Lansdowne

December 2, 1846.

I have received your letter of the 30th and am glad to perceive that to a great extent we agree. But the main difficulty, that of providing funds for setting the able-bodied to work, is by your scheme not provided for. Supposing (which is extravagant) that all the destitute able-bodied could be employed on useful public works, I conceive it to be impossible to argue that Great Britain ought to bear the cost of those works. There remain : 1. The plan of lending now pursued : a plan which must in no long time transfer to the Crown half the land in Ireland, etc. 2. The plan of taxing the land for the

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payment of unemployed labourers, which Bessborough appears to favour. This plan would tax only the mortgager, who in many instances enjoys only a fifth or tenth of the property. The objections that you urge against the third mode have great weight. But with respect to a renewal of the Income Tax, I suppose everyone allows that till 1850 we cannot think of it. And I know not by what other plan we can reconcile the English and Scotch to make the exertions which are necessary in Ireland. It is an unfortunate alternative ; but I see no other course which can ward off an Income Tax but the extension to Ireland in some shape or other of the English Poor Law.

From H. Labouchere

December 11, 1846.

I have only time to write a line to you upon the painful report of the condition of those places, which are now very numerous, in which the workhouses are full and applicants are turned away to perish. It is impossible to allow this state of things to continue without making some effectual effort to arrest it. The mortality in the workhouses is rapidly increasing, both from the crowded state of the Unions and the exhausted state in which the applicants are received.

From Lord Bessborough

December 12, 1846.

You must by this time be almost tired of seeing my handwriting, but I must say a word or two on your letter just received. Lord Lucan could not have given you a worse account of the abuses that are practised by the Relief Committees than really exist, but what can be done ? I have, I assure you, spared no pains in attempting to make those who compose these committees a little more careful and provident than they are, and from what has come under my own observation since I have been at Bessborough I feel confident that with a little exertion everything in respect to the relief might have gone on

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well. I have over and over again stated to them what the object of the relief was, what class of persons were to be employed, and more particularly, by way of defining my own meaning on this subject, that no person rated above £5 should be employed. It has been impossible, however, to get them to attend to anything of the sort in most places, and gentlemen in many parts of the country, instead of exhorting their own tenants and farmers to give employment and keep down the Relief Fund expenses, have on the contrary forced on their own tenants who were not objects for relief and left out the destitute who were. Now no exertion on the part of the Government and the Board of Works can meet cases of this sort. With three hundred Baronies proclaimed from one end of the kingdom to the other, how can strangers appointed to superintend these Committees strike off those who ought not to have been placed upon the works when not assisted by the resident gentlemen? After a little while, it is true, the officer of the Board of Works finds out that he has been imposed upon, refuses to give tickets and gets licked and beat for his pains. I stop the work and the whole business has to begin again. Such, I am sorry to say, is the picture of half the Relief Committees in Ireland.

To Lord Bessborough

December 16, 1846.

Parliament will meet on the 19th of Jan. The Cabinet have agreed to bring in measures : 1. For loans to proprietors for Drainage Improvement on easier terms than now in force. 2. For Waste Lands. 3. For an amended Relief List, very much on the principle of your proposal. 4. For giving relief to the infirm and impotent out of the Workhouse. 5. For facilitating emigration. These measures must be quite ready before Parliament meets. I wish you would send me over as soon as you can a sketch well matured of your plan for a Poor Employment Act on the notions you already sent

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me. I think the principle of a Labour Rate (as we understand it in England), that is to say that those who employ their due proportion of destitute labourers should have an allowance in the rate, may very properly be introduced in the Bill. But I should decidedly object to allow each Townland to take care of its own poor.

To Lord Bessborough

December 17, 1846.

We have been much alarmed by a circular of the Board of Works, which seems to authorise the carrying on of all the ordinary operations of agriculture by means of Government pay, only saying that a fortnight's work is to be accomplished in a week. We really cannot stand this. No Ministry could defend such a proceeding. At the same time I am anxious that you should consider whether, having the purse in our hands, we may not, when the frost breaks, oblige the farmers to employ their men themselves on the cultivation of the soil. You might say that where one-eighth of the population of a county is employed on public works, you will dismiss one-half alternately each week, in order to have the land ploughed and sown, that where one-tenth is so employed one-third shall be dismissed every third week, and so on. Where there is not more than one twenty-fourth employed on public works, none to be dismissed. Something of the kind must be done. On the other hand relief to the helpless and aged might be given at the door of work-houses, and we might double the subscriptions raised for such a purpose.

To Charles Wood

December 26, 1846.

I think if a proprietor would agree to employ his proportion, say twenty or fifty of the destitute labourers, he might be exempted from assessment. But we must work out this proposition. It is in fact a

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labour rate, and must be so considered. It forces a grazing farmer to employ as many labourers as an arable farmer, and is *pro tanto* a forcible interference with the best application of capital. Its inconveniences are manifold, and abuses will spring up like mushrooms. Thus we ought to give every facility for avoiding the necessity of any labour rate. Private improvement and public works are the best modes of doing this. We should therefore favour, as we are doing, private improvement and public works. Of all public works none are so useful as railroads, and I trust we shall come to an understanding with the Companies.

To H. Labouchere

December 28, 1846.

You say truly that we have fallen upon evil times, but we must persevere and go through with it. I trust the measures we have taken for the relief of severe distress by allowing relief to be given to the infirm, and sending food to be sold in the least accessible districts, will have some effect in mitigating the horrible famine which presses so cruelly on some parts of Ireland. Our measures to be laid before Parliament, if they are not immediate remedies, must at least go in the right direction. Any law which encourages apathy, promotes jobbing, and confirms improvidence will clearly be a step in a wrong direction. We must take great care that the Labour Rate Act, as it is improperly called, does not bear this character. One mode of counteracting its evils, and I believe the best mode, would be to lay part of the immediate burthen on the owners and occupiers of land. If it shall be finally the opinion of Bessborough and yourself that this cannot be done, we must try to attain the same object indirectly. It seems to C. Wood and me that, if the number of unemployed able-bodied labourers in an electoral district are fairly apportioned according to the Poor Law assessment on each proprietor, then the proprietor might be relieved from any further

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proportion of assessment if he agreed to employ the number assigned to him. This he might do, either by using his own money, or money that he had borrowed under our Treasury minute, or finally money advanced under the Poor Employment Act itself. I am aware of many objections to this proposal, but on the whole the benefits, I think, outweigh the evils. Any mode which will compel landlords and tenants to exert themselves, even if it be not the best mode, if it be the most practicable mode, should be adopted.

With respect to more general measures, I do not think the suspension of the Navigation Laws likely to be useful. The French have a small mercantile marine; we have a very large one. American ships can, as the law now stands, bring produce from America, and Russian ships from Odessa. We should gain nothing by a discouragement of British shipping at the present moment. I understand vessels for corn from New Orleans can be hired in the City of London at 12*s.* a quarter, which is not a very extravagant rate. We are employing Government steamers in carrying corn from Liverpool and Plymouth to Ireland, and I do not know that we can do more in this way; but I shall write to Auckland about it. Let me now refer again to the direction in which we wish to move. By offering donations, equal, and in some cases double, of the subscriptions raised, we shall mitigate the present evil, and enable many to obtain food who could not get it on the relief works. By the Employment Bill we shall force cultivation and improvement, if rightly framed and *properly enforced*. By encouraging railways in a manner nearly in accordance with the proposals made by the Railway Companies, we shall give a great deal of useful employment. So likewise by encouraging fisheries. I am in hopes that the depots of salt for curing, and the establishment of fishery schools will at length rouse the Irish to be fishermen. There are symptoms at length of the landlords moving. But I suppose that in some

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cases where they refuse, nearly the whole income is paid to mortgagees.

To Lord Bessborough

December 28, 1846.

You have scarcely written me a word about the arming. I see that it goes on as vigorously as ever. I fear some bad outbreaks will occur before the Spring, and I hope Sir E. Blakeney will take care to have all his detachments in situations where they can defend themselves. Pray let me know your deliberate opinion respecting our Arms Bill before the Cabinet meets again. You will be much better in Dublin than in the House of Lords. But you must take care to furnish Lansdowne and Clanricarde with all the information necessary to answer attacks and questions in the House of Lords.

To Lord Bessborough

December 29, 1846.

I should wish to see your Fishery Plan in detail. But I think that a sum of £5,000 placed in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant, Chief and Under Secretary, might be made very useful. Let me have your scheme drawn out, and we will consider it with a favourable inclination. Emigration is now in the hands of Lord Grey. Those who are eager for emigration on a large scale should recollect that the colonies cannot be prepared at once to receive large masses of helpless beings, and there is no use in sending them from starving at Skibbereen to starve at Montreal. What we can do is to enact that the same body which has to provide employment for the able-bodied should be empowered to provide by rates for the conveyance of families who accept it to one of the Queen's Colonies, they having received from the Emigration Commissioners (established by me in 1839) an assurance that upon their landing in a colony to be named they would be provided for. However, Grey has all this subject under consideration in conjunction with Charles

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Buller. We are all agreed that emigration, to do any good, ought to be systematic.

*To Sir Charles Wood*¹

January 3, 1847.

I have sent you under another cover a letter of Bessborough's. But there is another subject which has again become prominent. It is the price of grain. I cannot reconcile to my notions of public duty to meet Parliament without proposing a suspension of the present duties, or rather a reduction of the duty to 1*d.* for six months. Your plan for the admission of sugar to breweries and distilleries should likewise be proposed in the first week of the session. It is, I trust, an effectual one. But I shall think it right to see Sir Thomas Fremantle and John Wood in the course of this week to consult them confidentially upon the subject. The revenue must be as far as possible maintained, in order to enable us to continue the immense exertions we are making in Ireland.

From Sir Charles Wood

January 5, 1847.

I am inclined to think that there is no corn now in the world *unbought*, and I very much doubt whether taking off the duty will make 6*d.* difference, and the importers will pocket it all. Nevertheless I won't object. All I beg is that if you do open the ports it may be only to June 1. It is of essential importance to force the arrivals as soon as possible, and nothing will do this so much as limiting the time for free import.

To Sir Charles Wood

January 7, 1847.

It is not Bessborough's wish that anything like the Townland point should be conceded. But I had understood you to say, and it was my opinion also, that if a

¹ He succeeded to the baronetcy on his father's death, December 31, 1846.

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landlord employed the number of people allotted to him by the sessions in any way he pleased, he should not be obliged to do more. This in the present state of Ireland is almost the only course I can see by which the due cultivation of the soil can be secured. The landlord who does not like to burthen himself with a debt for ten years will get his tenant to employ a due number of labourers, and thus the crops of next season will be obtained. Monteagle, who is very bitter against our proceedings, says that he thinks all the wheat that would be sown has been, and that the farmers are waiting till the best moment to consider whether they shall plant potatoes, or spring corn without manure. I saw Mr. Perry yesterday on Irish railroads. As a question of finance there is some difficulty. But the employment of 110,000 unskilled labourers is a great temptation. What you propose about sugar appears to be quite right. You will see that the Irish Government have not yet sent us the Bills. G. Grey and I have given directions about the Poor Law, which must be one of the first measures. You should bear in mind that the original Townland proposal is that each Townland should support its own poor, which is quite different from my proposal.

From Lord Bessborough

January 28, 1847.

I am really in hopes that there is going to be some alteration in the price of food. My agent writes me word that the price of grain has been steadily falling for the last three market days, and everything depends on this as to our future arrangements. I know that it will be very difficult to make the House of Commons and the press believe that the Irish landlords are not entirely to blame; but though I have been, ever since I have been in Ireland, much inclined to blame them on many occasions, I acquit them generally now. They might in many cases, it is true, have stood out against the folly of the Relief Committees; but still there is a great deal

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even in this respect to be said for them. With a really starving people surrounding the doors of their houses where they sit and a body of ill-disposed ruffians urging them on to violence, it requires more firmness than is to be expected perhaps from that class of persons to resist the pressure from without. Add to this the difficulty that they had in agreeing with one another in taking the Reproductive works from a petty jealousy of one another, and you will find the great difficulty there was in making the presentments at all available to the situation of the country. In looking at the mode in which the act has been put in force on well regulated estates where one or two gentlemen divided the electoral division between them, you will perceive that the fault was not in the act or the alteration of the act, but in the unfortunate situation in which Ireland is placed from the great subdivision of property among petty landlords.

From Lord Bessborough

March 15, 1847.

Everybody seems pleased with your speech on the Poor Law, and I am told that nothing could be better received than it was in the House. It is the most difficult subject that could be brought forward. I do not see what else could be proposed, although it certainly is a subject of doubtful character and the execution of which may create great difficulties in this country. No one who has lived in the agricultural districts adjacent to great towns but must look with dismay at the army of able-bodied vagrants who infest the country who have been forced into these towns by the clearance of properties and other causes, but whose existence is a grievance that must be provided for, and how to do it I cannot exactly see. No person in England can understand the meaning of a vagrant in Ireland. He is not a beggar nor does he ask charity, but partly by threats, partly by working on the fears of a superstitious class of persons and partly by absolute force he takes away the subsistence of almost

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one member of a family in a farmer's house. If anything could be done to make this class of persons amenable to the law, it would be one of the greatest blessings to Ireland.

To Sir Charles Wood

March 26, 1847.

I do not know whether it will make any part of your statement or vote to-night, but I think it essential that the Loan Commissioners should as soon as possible be furnished with funds, that they may as soon as possible assist either Railway Companies, or any other public undertakings, which have complied with the conditions usually required of those who apply for advances for public works. It is more than ever necessary that between this time and the harvest of 1848 as much employment as possible should be given. Otherwise we shall see our Poor Law utterly fail from not getting a wind to take it out of harbour.

To Sir Charles Wood

June 28, 1847.

I think the relief to the able-bodied may cease on the 15th August. But as Twisleton says that rates cannot be collected till harvest is got in and partly sold, it may be right to continue the temporary relief for the infirm and for widows and children till the 31st August. Sir John Burgoyne should be aware that when the 'destitute' require an immediate rate, the farmers will curtail the lists very considerably. In fact it will be a fight between Landlord, Tenant & Co. *versus* Priest, Labourer, Burgoyne & Co.

From Lord Palmerston

August 19, 1847.

I see that almost all the Irish elections have gone in favour of Repeal candidates; and this just after two or three millions of Irish have been saved from famine and

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pestilence by money which, if the Union had not existed, their own Parliament would never have been able to raise. This is not natural; but effects must have causes, and I should say that the Catholic Priests are the cause of this feeling. They are much pinched just now. As long as relief works went on they got a penny out of every shilling paid in wages. They cannot equally well get a spoonful out of every plateful given away from the soup kitchens. They see England and Scotland arraigned against any endowment for them, and they think they would get one from a purely Irish Parliament. They want, moreover, to be the dominant Hierarchy, for though humility is the essence of religion, pride is the characteristic of priesthoods. The only way of counter-acting these bad influences will be that which you have long meant to do, the sending a good man as Minister to Rome; but we must have a very good and sensible man and a man likely to acquire influence there. Such a man we shall no doubt be able to find.

CHAPTER VII

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, 1846-51

THE first domestic task of the Russell Ministry, encouraged and supported by Cobden, was to complete the work of Peel by the total repeal of the Corn Laws and the reduction of the enormous duty on slave-grown sugar. The fitness of the Prime Minister for his post was recognised on all hands, and his parliamentary triumphs were watched with admiration by Greville and other experienced observers. Even the austere Ashley had a good word for the statesman whose support assured the passage of the Ten Hours Act for women and children in factories. When the mandate of the Parliament of 1841 expired in 1847, the Premier increased the number of his Whig supporters ; but he continued to depend on the Peelites, some of whom he vainly exhorted from time to time to accept posts in his Ministry.¹ The greatest loss in the General Election was the defeat of Macaulay at Edinburgh ; but Lord John was returned by the City at the head of the poll.

The Year of Revolutions passed over England without disasters, though not without grave anxieties. The resolve of the Chartists to overawe Parliament by a monster procession and a monster petition caused a momentary panic ; but the firm action of the Government in declaring the proposed meeting illegal, and the ready response of 170,000 men to the appeal for special constables, went far to restore public confidence. April 10, to which

¹ See Parker, *Life of Sir James Graham*.

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some had looked forward with hope and more with apprehension, passed without bloodshed, and Parliament occupied itself in passing the Treason Felony Act. The monster procession from Kennington to Westminster broke down, partly owing to heavy rain and partly because Feargus O'Connor, its leader, lost his nerve. The great petition, which was conveyed to the House of Commons in five cabs, was discovered to be swollen by faked signatures, and Chartism dissolved in ridicule. The three men on whom the chief responsibility had rested—the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary,¹ and the Duke of Wellington—were overwhelmed with congratulations from at home and abroad; and it was generally agreed that the steadiness of the mass of the people, at a time when the Continent was rocking to its foundations, was due in large measure to the statesmen who had carried the Reform Bill and abolished the tax on bread. A further welcome advance towards unfettered trade and commercial prosperity was registered by the repeal of the Navigation Acts, the principal measure of the session of 1849. When, however, the Prime Minister proposed a fresh advance in Parliamentary Reform, he failed to carry his colleagues with him; and in finance the Russell Ministry proved as resourceless as that of Melbourne and Grey.

The tragic death of Peel in 1850 was a blow to the Ministry as well as to the country. Lord John once again invited the Peelite leaders to enter the Cabinet; but co-operation proved impossible, owing to their disapproval of the Government policy in regard to papal claims. In February, 1851, after a series of divisions, which seemed to show that he had lost the confidence

¹ For the share of Sir George Grey see Bishop Creighton's *Memoir*, pp. 69-79. The best account of Chartism is in Dolléans, *Le Chartisme*.

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of the House, Lord John resigned ; and though he was compelled to resume office by the failure both of Protectionists and Peelites to form a Ministry, the vitality of the Cabinet began to ebb rapidly, and his plan of a new Reform Bill found little favour among his colleagues.

The Prime Minister's attention was far from being engrossed by the urgent political questions of the day, for his active mind ranged over almost every department of life and thought. In the sharp controversy aroused by his appointment of Professor Hampden to the Bishopric of Hereford in 1847, he was not only maintaining the incontestable rights of the Crown but encouraging the Broad Church pioneers of a sane and courageous Biblical criticism. His correspondence with Tom Moore, Dickens, Leigh Hunt, Macaulay, Murchison, Hallam, and Rogers, illustrates his delight in the company of men of letters and his practical interest in the advance of science and scholarship.

From Richard Cobden

July 4, 1846.

Your letter reached me just as I was starting from Manchester for Montgomeryshire, and I take the first opportunity of replying. I had so unreservedly stated to your intimate friends, and I believe to yourself, in the course of a short conversation which we had together in Chesham Place, that I had not the most distant desire or intention to take office under any circumstances, that I assure you I should not have felt in the slightest degree overlooked if you had not referred to the subject again. I beg, however, to express my high sense of your kindness in writing to me. Perhaps I ought to say no more, but spare you in your present busy moments.

Let me, however, just add a suggestion as to the policy of your government. *Do not lose the Free-trade*

wind. Your countrymen can only entertain one idea at a time. There is much to do yet. All the anomalies of the tariff must be removed. *All* differential duties must follow corn. The absurd 50 per cent. protections on the innumerable petty articles in the tariff must be swept away. Sugar and coffee must be equalised. I would not give the sugar interest a longer respite than Peel has given the English agriculturists. February, 1849, must be the doomsday of all protectionists. By the way, I heard Bright declare that he should vote against your five years' grace to the sugar interest, on the ground that better terms could be made at the hustings. I shall not be in the House, but should regret if you were to lose the support of the ardent men out of doors by stickling for a year or two. Then there is still a remnant of duty on butter, cheese, and hams. I would propose, if no insuperable revenue obstacles interposed, to remove these duties by the time the corn-law expired. The butter and cheese interests are confined to half-a-dozen counties only; it is unjust to retain any protection on these articles whilst it is altogether removed from corn. In all these measures you will be backed out of doors, and Peel, who is justly proud of representing amongst statesmen in the eye of the world the *Free Trade Idea of the age*, will and must aid you. The men who voted with him on his side of the House will also be ready to go forward with you in completing his policy, as the only way of retaining the countenance of the Free-trade party out of doors, upon whom they must rely for their seats. By your thus spreading your sails to the free-trade gale at the outset of your voyage, you will acquire a prestige and support with the English public which will help you in other measures, those affecting Ireland locally, for instance, about which, however, it is very difficult to interest, I am sorry to say, the English mind. Were I in your position I would dwell strongly in the address to the London electors upon my determination to carry out to completion the free-trade policy, which Peel has, with your aid,

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so well begun. And this should be also the burden of my first speech as Prime Minister in the House. Now I am aware what a liberty I am taking in writing so abruptly, but pray forgive me. Don't trouble yourself to reply.

*From Lady Palmerston*¹

December 21, 1846.

If you should by chance have a day to spare in any of your moves between town and your new place or Woburn, I am sure it would give Melbourne very great pleasure to see you at Brocket; he does not write to invite, but he would I am sure be much gratified and flattered if you and Lady John would stop there, as he is always as much hurt at his old friends not proposing to go and see him as if he was constantly writing to invite them. Very unreasonable this, you will say. I know how much your time is taken up, so I only mention this peculiarity of Melbourne's for the chance of your having a spare day, which I am afraid is not very likely.

From Professor Hampden

Oxford: May 13, 1847.

It is not without considerable effort, I may assure you, that I have ventured thus personally to address your Lordship, as I have feared that I might be doing what was unusual and unwarrantable. But I have felt that I had no other more proper mode of bringing my case under your Lordship's notice. I have held my present office in the University now for upwards of eleven years, in times confessedly difficult and trying.² I had indeed to enter on its duties with a struggle against the intolerance and persecution of a party, then but little known in its rise, but whose views and intentions have

¹ See the charming volumes, *Lady Palmerston and her Times*, by the Countess of Airlie.

² He had been appointed Regius Professor of Divinity by Melbourne, despite considerable opposition on the ground of his Broad Church doctrines.

since been fully developed. I have, however, providentially lived down, as I may say, that opposition, and been enabled to earn the confidence of those who had at first been unfairly excited to distrust. I trust, therefore, I shall not be regarded as presumptuous and unreasonable in hoping for a promotion, which has been accorded to my predecessors in the Divinity Chair almost without exception. And I would solicit accordingly your Lordship's favourable consideration of me among the candidates for the appointment to the See which is now about to be instituted.

*From T. B. Macaulay*¹

August 6, 1847.

Thanks for your letter. I will do nothing hastily ; nor will I do anything that, on full consideration, seems to me likely to add to your difficulties. I hope, however, that I may be able, without causing you any inconvenience, to avail myself of the opportunity which I now have of exchanging politics for letters. In the meantime I shall take a short trip to the Netherlands, and forget our troubles among Cathedrals and Picture Galleries.

From Sir Charles Wood

August 14, 1847.

I hear from Howick that Lord Chichester has declined the Poor Law Commissionership, and I wish you would think of Charles Buller. It seems to me to be very essential that the head of the Board should be a person who would be himself popular, and would make the dealings with the Board also popular ; this, I think, that he would do better than anybody. The pressure is sure to be in the H. of C., and I am quite persuaded that to give the parliamentary administration of the law a fair chance we ought to have in the H. of Commons a person capable of fighting a good fight, and with a

¹ Macaulay lost his seat at Edinburgh.

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prestige in his favour to carry him through the unpopularity of his office. Howick makes a suggestion that Cobden might take this place. He will be in a very difficult and awkward position for us. He has been elevated to a high point, complimented in every way, and of course must take a part. You know how difficult it is for a person in such a position not to take an advance line at times, and this might be very inconvenient. I do not know what his opinions on this subject are, and I incline to Buller myself, but nevertheless you must consider betimes what Cobden's position in parliament will be, and how his conduct may affect us.

Peel's party as a party numerically speaking is gone, and what I anticipate of him and his is this. We have a very uncertain H. of Commons to deal with. It will be a miracle if we do not make some blunder or get into some scrape like Althorp's minority on the malt tax, and then there are Peel and his party ready to avail themselves of the opportunity and to say again, 'We are the only people to do business,' and ready to take our places as leaders of the popular party. This seems to me to be our great danger. The protectionists are thoroughly beaten. We outnumber them completely without Peel's people; and I am convinced that he (Peel) means to pursue the popular, body-of-the-people line. They and we are the rivals for the lead of the great popular party; we have it in very difficult circumstances. He had it very much in favourable times, and has acquired a character which he does not deserve; but still there is a great leaning on the part of many of our friends towards him. This is what has always made me anxious to enlist some of his best men. We are safe enough if we can rally some of his quondam supporters and get the H. of C. into two parties. We can keep down the protectionists, and it is with them that our open warfare will be. Navigation laws, and similar questions, will arise on which they and we are in decided opposition to each other. It is a fair stand-up fight on these points,

and we are the strongest ; but I am afraid of the force on our flank, supporting us if we carry all our own people, but availing themselves of every opportunity of claiming and—such is the fate of people in power—obtaining credit for superior sagacity and conduct from our own people whenever we trip, and no Government can avoid trips and mistakes.

To Sir Charles Wood

August 15, 1847.

It may be that Charles Buller is the person best fitted to be at the head of the Poor Law Commission. But I have my doubts whether peers and country gentlemen would submit, with much complacency, to his adverse decisions. It is a point of great importance, and must be reserved. Your general observations have no doubt a good deal of truth in them. But I beg you to observe that my object has been all along to secure a majority of Liberals, without attaching undue importance to the possession of power by the Whigs. I am aware that the dishonesty of the country is prepared to rally round Peel at any time, but I think they are mistaken in their man. In the first place he is not prepared to go headlong with Hume and Ellice into the adoption of radical changes ; and in the next place he would not make any sacrifices for the resumption of power. You may say, we may make blunders ; to be sure we may, but even in the commission of blunders a Government may be supported by those who think well of its general policy. Thus I supported Maynooth, though I thought it a blunder to bring in a bill on the subject. I should be very glad to have the assistance of Cobden in the Cabinet. Dalhousie has accepted the Government of India, and would *not* have accepted the Board of Controul, nor should I approve of sending Hobhouse to India. He is an able man, and a good debater, but not likely to do well alone, any more than Durham or Ellenborough.

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To Sir Charles Wood

August 18, 1847.

It is to be expected that the drain of bullion from this country to pay for corn should for some time longer oblige the Bank to be cautious and stringent in its issues. We cannot but applaud their discretion. There is another subject, however, upon which some resolution should probably be taken early. I always thought it folly to check our own railway speculations when the interest of money was low ; and the only effect of such checks would be to transfer to France, Germany, Spain and all the rest of the world the capital which was seeking for higher profits. But now that the interest of money is $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and the Railway people themselves are crying out, I think it may be advisable to take some decided course for next session. If so, Strutt should be early consulted, and he should be the organ through which we should communicate with parties seeking for new railroads. Those who introduced Bills last session and carried them through committee in either House, may have a fair claim to proceed. But projects entirely new should either have, 1. the approbation of the Railway Board and of the Board of Treasury, or, 2. be opposed by the Government on the second reading. The Railway Board would be able to judge how far the railroad proposed was wanted for the local or general interests of the Public, and, that amount of public benefit being given, the Treasury might say how far the state of trade and the money market would justify such an outlay.

To Sir Charles Wood

August 21, 1847.

I talked with Dalhousie yesterday about Navigation Laws. He said he should be ready to agree to many minor changes, but should be afraid of allowing foreigners to carry between us and our Colonies. Yet I do not see

how we could say that an American ship might bring sugar from Cuba here and not sugar from Jamaica. Pray consider this point well. I am of the same mind as you—to propose an Act of Parliament allowing the Queen to make treaties, giving up the exclusive privileges conferred by the Navigation Act, with the exception of the Coasting Trade.

From Lord Lansdowne

Wiesbaden: August 26, 1847.

The reformation of the Poor Law is, notwithstanding the little rubs and difficulties which necessarily attended its progress, the greatest benefit the last Whig administration left to the country, and we are deeply responsible for not allowing its efficiency to be impaired. A particular system of colonial or foreign policy may be changed subject to some inconvenience, but if this is once allowed to lapse it will be impossible to retrieve it.

To Sir Charles Wood

November 15, 1847.

I am afraid that the Tractarians, who are nearly Roman Catholics, will disapprove of Dr. Hampden's appointment. But I think the having stood the onslaught of Newman and other equally faithful members of the Church of England entitles a man, when he is getting worn with his work, to honourable reward. The Archbishop at the time recommended Newman to Melbourne as Professor of Divinity. I think we should have been in a pretty scrape when the Regius Professor of Divinity went off to Rome, bag and baggage.

From Dr. Malby, Bishop of Durham

November 22, 1847.

You must allow me as an old friend, warmly interested in your welfare, and anxious about the interests of the

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Church, to congratulate you on your sagacity as well as courage in promoting Dr. Hampden. I have never even seen Dr. H., but I have read his writings and examined the passages so violently objected to. I never found in any the slightest ground for the attack, except that he had chosen for a subject one in which it would be difficult for the most careful writer to avoid stumbling upon some expression at which ignorance or bigotry could not but cavil.

From Henry Philpot, Bishop of Exeter

December 10, 1847.

My Lord, the name of Russell ought to be—ever will be, I am sure, in a reflecting hour—a security to us against the application by you of a phrase so sacred as ‘the rights of the Crown’ to a matter so foul as the provisions of the statute of which I am writing. My Lord, the Crown has no *right*, can have no *right* (I trust, too, that it will be found to have no *power*) to force a Bishop on the Church, whom the Church has just right to reject, as a ‘setter forth of erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God’s Word.’ True, my Lord, the Statute 25 Henry 8th c. 20 (the Magna Charta of Tyranny) does give to the Crown a power, which your Lordship has been pleased to call a ‘right,’ to condemn to prison and to penury any Dean or any Chapter which may refuse compliance with such a mandate. But no statute has the power to effect the execution of the Mandate itself. No statute has the power to make an honest and conscientious Chapter elect, or an honest and conscientious Prelate consecrate, to the office of Bishop, such a person as I have described above. Forbear, my Lord, while you have yet time. Persist not in your rash experiment. The bands of your vaunted Statute will snap asunder like withes, if you attempt to bind with them the strongest of all strong men, the man who is strengthened with inner might against the assailant of his Church.

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To Lord Lansdowne

January 4, 1848.

I think that in the present state of parties, before the commencement of the session, there is an opportunity if not a duty of attempting to unite with our party those whose general views agree with ours. It is evident that a Tory Ministry can only succeed by a change of opinion ; that a Peelite Ministry would be numerically weak. If this be so a Whig Ministry with Peelite elements, or a Peelite Ministry with Whig elements, afford the best chance of strength and stability. And of these the former would be the best, as the Whigs are the more numerous party of the two. Further, I think it is desirable that the younger members of the Peel party should be looked to rather than the older. There has been less collision, less feud, and consequently there would be less scandal. If you agree with me so far, I will mention Sidney Herbert and the Duke of Argyll as two of the men I should most like to see in office. With Graham I am quite ready to act, but I fear it would displease many of our friends to see him again with us.

To Sir Charles Wood

January 9, 1848.

I am much obliged to you for your paper on our Defences, of which I shall make much use in what I have to propose to the Cabinet on Wednesday. I have received the enclosed extraordinary letter from Labouchere, without the plan of Porter's to which he refers. But either, 1. free labour sugar cannot compete with slave labour sugar, and in that case if we wish to preserve the W. Indies, as it is called, we must make up our minds to a permanent protection and not a temporary one—to a protection moreover of 10s. a cwt. and not of 6s., which has caused the present competition. Or 2. the distress is temporary owing to the change, and if we give way on that ground we shall have the argument equally strong

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for corn if 1849 produces a large import and a low price. These appear to be the dangers of a change. Six weeks ago I was disposed myself to give more time and a protracted differential duty. I am ready to do so now if the Cabinet think it right, but I see strong reasons on the other side. But my plan would be, if we could afford it, rather to lower the planter's duty to 10s. than to keep the foreign duty at 20s. I should wish to have the Estimates proceeded with soon after Parliament meets, and to bring forward our Finance measures, and Defence of the Country on the 28th of February, one month before the financial year expires. As I wish to call for an effort on the part of the country, I think I ought to make the statement myself.

From Sir George Grey

March 7, 1848.

A crowd of people have collected all the morning in Trafalgar Square and threatened mischief to-night, but notices were posted requiring them to disperse and the place is pretty clear now. I hear they are gone to Kennington Common and intend to come back in force at night, but we shall have 2,000 police to keep them quiet, and I have desired the Park Gates shut at 8 o'clock to keep them out of the Park. I have just got a telegraphic message from Edinburgh. It says all was quiet this morning in Glasgow, but the people are expected to meet again at night. 300 soldiers had gone there from Stirling, in addition to some Cavalry and Infantry already there.

From Sir George Grey

March 7, 1848.

The people, after having dispersed from Trafalgar Square, collected again about seven and parties of them have been going about the streets breaking windows and lamps. They made a rush towards the Palace, but did no harm there and we have a large body of Police in the

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neighbourhood which I have no doubt will keep all quiet there. I have got the Life Guard horses saddled in case of their being wanted, but the number of people is not large and I am told they are chiefly lads. There was a meeting on Clerkenwell Green this evening, and I hear there were tricoloured cockades and an intention expressed of going to the gunsmiths for arms. This is very disagreeable and troublesome, but I hope it will go no further.

From Sir George Grey

March 8, 1848.

The riots at Glasgow were serious but I hope are quite suppressed. My last report is by telegraph of this morning. The city had been quiet during the night, with every appearance of its continuing so. Edinburgh was a false alarm. All quiet there. I have good accounts from Liverpool. We are quiet this evening in this part of London, and I hope there will be no more disturbance. We are to have a patrol of Mounted Police to-night in the streets, and a great many special constables have volunteered and been sworn in.

From Lord Palmerston

April 7, 1848.

I conclude that you have made all the necessary arrangements for the security of the Queen at Osborne; but it is rather an unprotected situation, and the Solent Sea is not impassable. Would it not be worth while to press on the manufacture of muskets? If you had to raise Volunteer Corps or to form Fencible Corps in Ireland you would want perhaps more arms than we have in store disposable for such services.

From the Duchess of Bedford

April 11, 1848.

Dearest John, I have been in an agony about you and most anxious about dear Fanny. Thank God, all has

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passed quietly, and may you be spared and protected in your arduous duties. God bless you.

*From Lady Mary Abercromby*¹

Turin: April 19, 1848.

Your admirable arrangements and their full success meet with an approbation which must be a great gratification to you. And if the failure of this attempt to create mischief has been great in England, it is certainly not less so on the Continent. All eyes were turned to London, perhaps with apprehension greater than they felt there, and people seem to breathe more freely since they have seen that the good sense and good feeling of the country still keeps it safe. You have given an excellent example to the rest of the world, and in these days, when all pretend to understand constitutional government, it does not pass unnoticed.

From Lord Ashley

May 20, 1848.

Many thanks for your liberality. I wish people of ten times your fortune would be the tenth part so generous. A friend of mine, a great studier of human nature, went, according to his custom, yesterday evening into one of the small Coffee Shops frequented by Chartists. About forty men assembled for debate; they were canvassing the merits of the meeting at Freemasons' Hall; and he heard the Chairman say to the man on his right hand: 'I say, Tom, if these chaps go on at this rate, they will upset our apple cart.' The truth is the designing men, aided by the events of the times and the new theories on property started in Paris, have deluded a portion of the community; but the mass are perfectly sound, and desire nothing but those social improvements which the Government and the Legislature of these Realms are both able and willing to give.

¹ Sister of Lady John Russell, wife of the British Minister at Turin.

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*From the Duke of Newcastle*¹

June 24, 1848.

It has been with the utmost concern, mortification, and alarm for the future, that I have observed the courses pursued in parliament with a view to an extensive alteration or entire abolition of the Navigation Laws. To me it appears that this is a subject of such vital and paramount importance that to maintain and foster the Navigation Laws is a matter absolutely essential to the existence of the Empire, if it be intended that England should continue to preserve her maritime superiority all over the world. All that promotes the formation of sailors and a sea-faring life, especially on long voyages, is of course attained by frequency and exercise. This is now attained by us by our extensive commerce and our distant colonies, as well as by the genius of the people. But cripple and discourage the extent of our commerce, with the employment of our ships and seamen, and how changed may be our position. How will it not affect the shipowner, the builder, the artisan, and the seaman, and all connected with shipping—and if, as must follow, the great nursery for seamen should be diminished, what a lamentable alteration would be needlessly effected in our situation and how deeply would it be to be deplored, when a necessity might occur for manning our War fleets, for the protection of our Commerce and the defence of our own home shores! Our natural, cheapest, surest and most practicable home defence is by our Navy. If our ships be sufficiently numerous and well manned, I am fully possessed with that belief that by God's aid we may justly consider the Island to be impregnable, for we know the stuff of which our sailors are made and the invincible spirit which inspires them. Looking then at the state of Europe and the world, and at what may be coming upon all of us, if we ourselves as a Nation or by

¹ For a picture of the fourth Duke see J. Martineau's biography of his son, the fifth Duke.

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our Rulers be heedless of our duties and unmindful of consequences, daring, tempting, and experimentalising, when we ought to be contented with, and grateful for, the known blessings which we possess, I write to entreat and beseech your Lordship to stay all further proceedings in this fearful measure and save us from the awful consequences which may attend its adoption.

To the Duke of Newcastle

July 19, 1848.

I cannot after inquiry think that our sailors or our ships are so inferior to those of other nations as to stand in need of the restrictions which were imposed by Cromwell to swamp Dutch competition.

*From Leigh Hunt*¹

September 18, 1848.

The kind letter which I received yesterday from your Lordship was such a relief to my mind and gave me so much pleasure every way that I should have written to thank you for it on the instant had not my very pleasure prevented me. I can do nothing on such an occasion but get up from my chair and walk about the room, and communicate the comfort to my family; and so the day goes on in a kind of holiday excitement. Let me add that what you do *not* say gratifies me as much as what you do, because it shows that you give me credit for having a due sense of the delicacies to which I alluded, and to which no man is more aware than myself that a subject is bound, in silence and in reverential distance, to defer. I feel that in the great friend whom I have the honour to possess in her Majesty's councils I shall at all events have a defender, *if need be*;—one who will save

¹ Leigh Hunt had presented a copy of his new book on London, *The Town*. Lord John had secured him a pension in 1847.

a grateful man from misconstruction in the minds of his Gracious Mistress and of the Prince who has deigned to accord him the addition of his kindly notice. Let me say furthermore that I communicate such letters but to few persons, and those only who are worthy of the confidence. But this your Lordship will have concluded as a matter of course. I rejoice to fancy Lady John and your Lordship reading some of my pages, among others, at your evening table. It is the kind of place and of readers which I aspire above all others to please, whether in palace, or in lodge, or in lettered cottage; and therefore I hope my friends in Richmond Park will allow me to consider them in future as among those to whom I particularly address myself. I shall not be afraid even of your Lordship's accomplished style or of her Ladyship's eyes as long as I utter, in whatever style I may, the truth that is in me and my admiration of all loving and lovely things.

From T. B. Macaulay

January 3, 1849.

Thanks for your kind note.¹ Your approbation is most gratifying to me. I am not surprised that you think me too much of a Trimmer. It is natural that a Russell should be partial to the Exclusionists. And indeed if the question were merely this—Ought the Exclusion Bill to have passed? I should without hesitation answer in the affirmative. But the question is whether, when it was clear that the Exclusion Bill would not pass, it was wise to reject all compromise, and, instead of framing laws which might have secured the liberties and religion of the nation, to proceed to excesses which produced a violent reaction in the public mind. This was Burnet's view; and I can hardly wish to be a more zealous Whig than Burnet.

¹ The first two volumes of Macaulay's *History* appeared in November, 1848.

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To Sir Charles Wood

January 6, 1849.

I received your letter respecting the vacancy caused by the loss of our invaluable friend and colleague.¹ But setting aside every other consideration, I wish to endeavour once more to bring into the public service one of the party who acted with Sir Robert Peel in office, and generally since he left office. It appears to me that unless Sir Robert Peel were again to place himself at the head of affairs his friends could hardly subsist as a Ministry. Still less would they cordially act with Lord Stanley. My view would be to introduce gradually into the Cabinet three of the men who have taken a part in public affairs agreeing with and supporting the present Ministry on almost all questions. For the Admiralty I think Mr. Sidney Herbert has the advantage of most experience, and would be the best choice. Two other Cabinet offices are likely to be vacant before long, tho' I cannot say that they will be at my disposal at present. You know our general policy, and that our reductions on the Estimates will considerably exceed a million. I do not know that there is any other point upon which we are likely to differ. If Sir James Graham would be considered likely to accept the Admiralty, I have no personal reason which should prevent my offering it to him. I wish you to communicate my views confidentially to Sir Robert Peel. The only members of the Cabinet I have consulted, Lord Lansdowne and Lord Palmerston, are favourable to the general view of strengthening the Government. If personal views are allowed to prevail, it may appear that what is called the Peel party may be called to the entire direction of affairs. But separated from the Protectionists and uprooted from the Whigs, they would

¹ Lord Auckland, First Lord of the Admiralty, died January 1, 1849. He was succeeded by Sir Francis Baring.

probably, after a time, give way to Lord Stanley and the Protectionist party. These changes are not in themselves desirable, and have a peculiar danger in the present disordered state of the world.

From Lord Palmerston

April 14, 1849.

I have written to Ponsonby to come over and take his seat for the debate on the Navigation Laws. Upon that subject Hobhouse mentioned to me last week what Lord Stanley had said to him as to the course which it was reported that we meant to pursue in regard to the passing that measure through the House of Lords. Of course it rests with you to decide upon this matter, but I own I entertain great doubts of the policy of staking the existence of your Government upon the adoption of our measure by the House of Lords. Its adoption or rejection by the Commons would be a different thing; but we came in with a knowledge that our support lies in the Commons and not in the Lords, and that in the Upper House we cannot at all times command a majority. Suppose we are beat upon our measure and thereupon go out, what is to follow? The Queen would not naturally send for Stanley, because, though he would have headed a majority in the Lords, he would head a minority in the Commons, where a majority would have passed the measure. You would have resigned because, being supported by a large majority in the Commons, you could not also command a majority in the Lords. The Queen then must send for somebody more likely than you to command a majority in both Houses. This consideration and her own inclination, with that of the Prince, would make her send for Peel. But how is Peel at present to command a majority in either House? Only by the support of the Whig party. Could you under such circumstances of difficulty created by your own act refuse to do your best to obtain for him

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that support ? Join him yourself as a member of his Government of course you could not ; many of us, your colleagues, would not do so either ; there may be some who would ; but you would be bound almost and obliged to hand your party over to Peel, and to abdicate your own position as Leader in his favour. Our Radicals would go to him whether you chose or not, and a great many of our independent supporters might do the same, so that at all events you would be left with a much reduced band. So supported he might go on with this House of Commons, and he would wait for another year to try the House of Lords about the Navigation Laws. But suppose Peel felt himself, even so supported, unable to undertake the Government ; then the Queen must send for Stanley. What would Stanley then do ? He would certainly accept ; but he must dissolve the Parliament in order to see whether he could get a more favourable House of Commons. I should think, however, a General Election in the present temper of the country, and in the present state of Europe, a misfortune. All kinds of questions would be set afloat, both political and commercial. Pledges would be required in many places in favour of Ballot, Extension of Suffrage, and other matters of that kind. The farmers all over the country would vote for Protectionist candidates. What would happen in Ireland I cannot say, but a General Election would not be a convenient thing there, in its progress or result. In this country the new returns would probably give strength to the two extremes, to the Protectionists and to the Radicals, and the Whigs would be the sufferers.

To Lord Palmerston

April 16, 1849.

I have shown Lansdowne your letter *de resignationibus*, and we had some talk upon it yesterday evening. We both agree that after having brought forward the Navigation Bill in so solemn a manner for two sessions we

ought to resign if we are beaten by a considerable majority in the Lords. The consequences may be very injurious, but I trust they would not prove so. I do not expect that the Queen would send for Stanley, if she could prevail on Peel to take office, and I do not think any of our colleagues could with decency leave our large party to join Peel, when all Peel's friends have refused to leave his small party to join me. At least I should tell them I could not approve of their doing so. Some of the subordinates might do so, and the Radicals would eagerly support him ; but if we kept together we should be able to support Peel in all good measures and to counteract any mischievous policy, foreign or domestic. If on the other hand we were to refuse and Stanley to be sent for, I doubt whether the Queen would give him the power to dissolve ; and then he would not be able to convulse the country by re-action. But the probable case is that we shall carry the Bill if we show ourselves in earnest upon it. Lansdowne put the case of a majority against the Bill being so small as to make our success certain a second time. In such a contingency we ought to deliberate ; and for this reason I agree with you that a previous declaration would be imprudent. This as a matter of discretion may safely be left to Lansdowne, who will move the Bill. There is one part of the Bill respecting the navigation of the St. Lawrence which it is absolutely necessary to carry this year. Whether in the event of the rejection of the Bill it could be separated from the other parts will deserve instant attention.

From the Duke of Wellington

June 23, 1849.

I don't think that I can engage to support the Oaths Bill, unless I make up my mind to forfeit all claim to respect in the House of Lords ! I have adhered strictly to what I stated to Her Majesty, when Her Majesty was graciously pleased to command that I should continue

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to exercise the command of the Land Forces, and I have moreover supported the Lords whenever it has been in my power ; and even in debate when I have thought I could promote good order, and the benefit of the public service, and above all the tranquillity of Her Majesty. It may still be in my power to be of service to Her Majesty's Government. But I am well convinced that I cannot do so effectually in Parliament unless Her Majesty should be graciously pleased to permit me to retire from the official service.

From T. B. Macaulay

June 30, 1849.

You will, I am sure, allow me, as a Cambridge man anxious for the welfare and honour of Cambridge, to say one word about the vacant Professorship of Modern History.¹ If Stephen be a candidate, I have done. My regard for him is such that I cannot but wish him success in any competition in which he may engage ; and I have no doubt that if his lectures should be less profoundly learned than those of men whose whole lives have been passed in study, the defect would be more than supplied by the practical statesmanship which nothing but long experience of great affairs can give. But, if Stephen be out of the question, I would venture to suggest that the claims of Kemble are entitled to your careful consideration. You have been too busy, I imagine, to read his book on our Anglo-Saxon polity. I really believe that I speak the sense of all who are entitled to judge when I say that it is a most valuable addition to our stock of historical knowledge, and, though not likely to be popular with the multitude, will always be held in high esteem by scholars and thinkers.

¹ On July 1 the Prince Consort offered Macaulay the post, which he refused, and which was therefore given to Sir James Stephen. See Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, ii. 260-61.

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To Lord Lansdowne

September 19, 1849.

I think the extension of the franchise a much easier question than you suppose. If indeed the object were to please the radicals, and not offend the protectionists, that would be hopeless; but to add largely to the numbers of voters, with increased strength to the constitution and in such a manner that the radicals must support the plan, is not I think a desperate task. I will draw up an outline soon, and send it to you.

From Lord Ashley

October 6, 1849.

Although it be at the risk of giving you offence, I must say another word respecting this movement for the alteration of Sunday labour in the London Post Office. I have been, as you know, most anxious to support your Government; and it is with this feeling that I write again to assure you that you have not any notion of the strong and determined resistance that will be made to this new arrangement. It will expose you, I suspect, to some personal and political annoyance. Mr. Rowland Hill declares, I hear, that 'all the opposition in the world shall not make him give way'; surely it is not for a subordinate officer so to pledge and bind Her Majesty's Government! The arrangement I hold to be wrong in itself; but the issue must be very serious, for it will be utterly impossible to refuse a Sunday delivery in London when it shall virtually have taken place in Liverpool, Manchester and other towns.

To the Duke of Bedford

December 18, 1849.

I said yesterday that I meant to write you a political letter, and I now sit down to fulfil my promise. I have been reading over my letter of November, 1845, and I

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think all my opinions at that time on the corn question were right, and with the exception of some party allusions, which disfigure it, the letter itself was a necessary declaration. The previous occurrences of the same year, which I need not here explain, made it incumbent on me to state unreservedly my opinions. However, the question now is as to the national policy for 1850. I have not the smallest hesitation in saying that the imposition of a fixed duty would now be foolish, and even perilous. It would revive the Corn Law League and its agitation combined with projects for destruction of the Church immediately and of the throne prospectively. It would at once deter all foreign nations from relaxing their restrictions on trade. It would or it would not raise the price of corn. If it did how great would be the discontent in the mass of the town population ! If it did not, as Mr. Herries expects, where would be the gain to the farmers ? In any case it would revive a struggle the cessation of which has mainly contributed to our stability during the heavings of the earthquake of Paris. So far as to the policy of the Whigs and the Peelites. The Protectionists look to a dissolution ! This is about as wise as for a man to put his hand into the fire to pick out a penny piece. If he catches the penny piece he will burn his hand, and thus while he gains a trifle sustain a serious injury. But while I am decided against returning to protection on food, I am quite averse to giving any countenance to the plans of Hume and Cobden. I think them destructive of the Empire. I agree with the Duke of Wellington that their authors, while on the one hand they would disarm the country, would on the other expose us to war in an unprepared state, and then blame the Executive for the consequences of their improvidence. Of course, if I am not prepared to favour or return to Protection or a Radical policy, I must not be surprised if Protectionists and Radicals should join in some vote decisive of the fate of the Ministry. But I am so convinced that my views are not only right but that they are

the views of every able statesman in Parliament (Lord Stanley excepted) that I would rather risk a contest in the position in which I at present stand than leave that position either for the old fortress of Tory prejudice or the high ground of the mountain. I will only conclude with saying that I do not think that in the present state of things we should be justified in bringing forward measures of organic change or extensive parliamentary reform.

To a Correspondent

December 31, 1849.

You think that a fixed duty should be imposed on wheat of 5*d.* or 6*d.* a quarter. There was a time when the substitution of such a duty would have given great relief to the consumers of bread, and would have furnished a resting place in that career which you think has been too fast. But now? What would now be its effects? If it did not raise the price of corn, the farmers would come to Parliament with fresh demands and increased discontent. But if it did raise the price of corn, as the Protectionists hope, can you imagine that the great body of consumers would rest satisfied? Indeed before the law could be enacted what a ferment, what a resistance might you not expect! Of course the present Government could not remain in office. Sir Robert Peel also has plainly intimated that he would oppose any such proposal as you contemplate. Imagine then the Protectionists in office—the whole country agitated on the perilous issue of the price of food—fresh democratic outbreaks on the Continent—a party among ourselves urging extreme changes in the constitution of the House of Commons, preparatory to other changes no less extensive—imagine all this, I say, and then tell me whether you think a 5*d.* duty on wheat is an object for which such formidable consequences should be risked. If, however, you are ready to incur such a responsibility, I am not. I am on the contrary determined to oppose

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to the utmost the imposition of any fresh duty on the import of corn.

To Sir Charles Wood

February 24, 1850.

In considering what is to be done I very earnestly wish you could find it practicable to abolish the excise on soap. 1. It is the only tax left of four, which Adam Smith terms taxes on the necessities of life. 2. It is against all sanitary principles which are now prevalent and would stop an agitation on window tax. 3. It would be a new declaration on behalf of the great body of the people, relieving consumers of all classes, instead of relieving one rich class. This is enough. I cannot say more, but it seems to me that with £900,000 saving this year we shall be able to bear any deficiency which can be presumed upon in the revenue.

To Sir Charles Wood

February 26, 1850.

I believe I shall give you less worry by writing than by talking to-day. In framing the budget it is to be considered whether the loans we propose to make should be five millions or two millions. In the former case I think five millions of Exchequer Bills should be funded, so as neither to glut or to starve the market for Exchequer Bills. The amount and kind of taxes to be reduced must of course depend on the probable amount of surplus, taking the Miscellaneous Estimates at £4,000,000 or thereabouts—rather less probably. But one thing you said yesterday rather alarmed me. You said it was advisable to spread the remission over different interests, that each might get something. Now it was very clear when I wrote to you from Woburn that the agricultural interest would press us not in particular but in local burthens. You answered me rightly enough, pointing out the evils of a transfer to the Consolidated Fund. We

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have stood by the public interests and have paid the penalty by a narrow escape from extinction. Let us not now desert the public interest for the sake of those whom we refused to conciliate when the path of expediency was open before us. Let us consider which taxes by their pressure do most public injury, and the remission of which will do most public good. If we take off one duty to please Pusey, and another to please Peel, if we give a sop to Cobden on one side, and a sop to Ashley on another, we shall only incur a just contempt, and neglect our first duty, attention to the interests of the people. What we can do may be small, but let it be done on right principles.

To Sir Charles Wood

April 16, 1850.

This division of last night is one of the awkwardest things we have had. A Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be allowed to settle the details of a measure he has approved. But to the future. It is evident that the raising of the higher stamps made Goulburn and the Protectionists so hostile. If we could lower the low rates without raising the higher, and reserve the general revision of the Stamp duties, it would be the best course. But then again I am not prepared to sacrifice more than £350,000 in stamp duties. I think we must stand by the surplus in substance of at least £700,000. I propose to have a Cabinet on Thursday when you can bring before us your views after consulting John Wood. It is a grievous blow anyhow.

From E. Everitt, late American Ambassador

May 20, 1850.

I think I do not presume too far upon your friendship in taking the liberty to introduce to your acquaintance and that of Lady John my friend, Mr. W. H. Prescott, the historian. He is too well known to you both by reputation to make it necessary for me to do more than

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name him ; although it may not be improper for me to add that Mr. Prescott's personal character is as excellent as his literary reputation is distinguished. He is in all respects one of the brightest ornaments of our social circle. I am the rather led to take this liberty from remembering the pleasure which Lady John expressed in reading one of Mr. P.'s historical works, which I had the satisfaction of lending her.

From Lord Palmerston

May 24, 1850.

It was intimated to me some little time ago that Disraeli was well disposed to your Government and looked forward to some sort of junction at some time or other between a portion of those who follow him and your party. I considered that what was said to me was only the statement of a fact and not to be intended as a communication (as the Chinese would say), but I have now been told in confidence that his speech the other day on Grantley Berkeley's motion was intended by him as an indication, and that he rather expected something to have been said to him about it, as to its being considered as a proof that there is not any insurmountable difference of opinion on some questions between him and the Government ; and I was given to understand, but not in any degree as coming from him, that he was disappointed and considered silence as rejection. I think it right therefore to tell you this ; and you will best judge whether in any communication you may have with him about the business of the House you might have something civil said to him which without committing you would test the correctness of what has been said to me.

From Lord Clarendon

July 4, 1850.

Poor Sir R. Peel's death is a great national calamity, and it will, I fear, add to your difficulties ; for he was

friendly to the Government, he had influence in the House of Commons and over the unruly members of his party, and the esteem in which he was held throughout the country has been proved by the anxiety about his fate and the sorrow at his death which all ranks and classes have manifested. The loss of such a man at this moment is not to be repaired, although its full extent may not be felt till next session, for I agree with you that from one cause or another the prospects of the State are anything but brilliant. Would it not be well to offer Lady Peel a Peerage, following the precedent when Canning died?

From Lord Stanley

July 7, 1850.

Pray excuse me for intermeddling in House of Commons business, but I am induced to write to you in consequence of a formal notice given by Sir George Grey that at the meeting of the House you would make some *observations* on the late melancholy event. He did not state whether you intended to make any *specific proposition*; but if so, I think you will concur with me that it is desirable the House should not be taken by surprise, and even, if you will allow me to say so, that some private understanding should, if possible, be come to between the leaders of different parties in the House of Commons. There are many politically opposed to Sir R. Peel who would willingly join in any tribute of respect to his memory which it might be thought right to pay; but there may be some also who might require to be reasoned with privately to induce them to do so, and who, if the matter were brought on suddenly, might raise objections and lead to debates which would naturally impair the value of the vote, whatever it might be. My only object in writing is to assure you of my wish to do all in my power to prevent any manifestation of party feeling, which I fear might be called out unless the terms of any motion, and the nature of any proposition you may have to make, were allowed to be deliberately considered and even

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privately canvassed. I think you will appreciate the
object and not misunderstand my motives.

*From Sir Roderick Murchison*¹

December 2, 1850.

As you mentioned the other day that you had read two works of Hugh Miller on my recommendation, I trust you are now sufficiently advanced in geological studies to do me the honour of accepting the accompanying little volume on the Alps and Italy, as extracted from the Journals of the Geological Society. I fear that these Memoirs, though they interest geologists so much as to have been already translated into German and Italian, are little more calculated to attract the general reader than the Silurian System of rocks or my other monster book on Russia; but there are parts, particularly the conclusions, which perhaps you may glance over. I have thanked your Lordship before now (*viva voce*) for your enlightened patronage of science in the grant made to the Royal Society; and at the present moment I cannot allow your nomination of Herschel to the Mastership of the Mint to pass without assuring you that this your last act has given myself and all my friends the very sincerest gratification.

From Sir Charles Wood

February, 1851.

I confess that I am disposed to congratulate you on the failure of your late attempt; for I think that the same reasons which have produced the failure would have rendered comfortable union out of the question, and I am not afraid of the result of Stanley's attempt.²

¹ President of the Geographical Society, and later Director of the Geological Survey.

² The Government had resigned after a defeat on February 20, when, contrary to its wish, leave was given to a private member to introduce a franchise Bill, and negotiations for union with the Peelites had broken down.

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I think it very doubtful how far he will succeed in forming a Government, and his duration seems to me impossible. I think, therefore, that you will soon have to form another yourself, and I trust that you will soon have the effective support of the moderate Conservatives. I did not, however, mean to send you only a speculation on the future. The purport of my note is to express to you my grateful sense of your invariable kindness for the last four or five years, and to say how sorry I am that not being brought daily together, as we have been, our constant personal intercourse must in some degree be diminished. This from the pleasure which I have derived from it I sincerely regret, but in all circumstances undiminished are the very sincere feelings of regard and affection.

*From Sir J. Hobhouse*¹

February 15, 1851.

I have just received your note, and do not hesitate a moment to say that my office and myself are, of course, at your disposal now, or at any other time. The acquisition of such a man as Graham would be cheaply purchased by my retirement from the India Board; but it would be dearly bought if George Grey were to leave the Home Office. I should not like to be separated from you, my long connexion with whom has caused me only one regret, namely, that I have been of so little use to you in Parliament.

From Lord William Russell

March 4, 1851.

I forbore to trouble you with condolence on the circumstances which led to your leaving office, and I do not know that congratulations on your resuming it will

¹ Friend of Byron; President of the Board of Control; later Lord Broughton. His *Recollections of a Long Life* were published in six volumes, 1909-1911.

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encumber you less. I say advisedly *congratulations*, for although I do not believe that to be the spirit in which you view the matter, I cannot extract any other moral from it than the establishment of the fact that after all the vicissitudes of attempted change it is agreed on all hands that you alone can conduct the administration of the country. There may have been much to disappoint a generous mind, much to make playing at parties an unsatisfactory game, but I trust that you will return to your labours, arduous as they are and difficult as the path before you undoubtedly is, with a just pride and confidence in your own powers of being again and for long as useful as you have heretofore been.

From Henry Hallam

March 5, 1851.

I must consider it a great mark of kindness and friendship on your part that you have taken so much interest in the communication made to you by Mr. Wood as to write to me on the subject. If I had any reason to anticipate any inconvenience to myself or my family by the step of resigning my pension, I should undoubtedly not have taken it. Many with better incomes than myself would be possibly right in retaining it. But it appears to me that these allowances are granted under a tacit condition that they shall not be thrown away on those who do not in any sense require them for their own gratification or for the good of their families. If a late heavy affliction had not fallen on me, the idea of resigning this pension would not have occurred to my mind.¹ My habits are not expensive and I have lost almost all those who could have shared with me the enjoyment of money. I must therefore adhere to my intention.

¹ His son Henry, who showed as much promise as Tennyson's friend Arthur, died in 1850.

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Suggested Epitaph on Lord Holland

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
HENRY RICHARD, LORD HOLLAND,
SON OF STEPHEN, LORD HOLLAND,
NEPHEW OF CHARLES JAMES FOX ;
IN THE ASSERTION OF PUBLIC FREEDOM
HE WAS ARDENT, BOLD AND INTREPID ;
IN THE RELATIONS OF PRIVATE LIFE
EASY, COURTEOUS, KIND AND BENEVOLENT :
A LOVER OF PEACE,
A HATER OF OPPRESSION,
THE INJURED LOST IN HIM
A FEARLESS ADVOCATE,
SOCIETY ONE OF ITS BRIGHTEST ORNAMENTS,
LEARNING AN ACCOMPLISHED SCHOLAR.
HIS FRIENDS WERE MANY AND AFFECTIONATE,
OF ALL CREEDS AND OF ALL PARTIES :
HE HAD NO ENEMIES.

From T. B. Macaulay

March 23, 1851.

I return the inscription. It is excellent. I have only one criticism, or hypercriticism, to make. Is it quite in harmony with the rest of so fine a composition to say that in Lord Holland the injured lost a fearless advocate, and learning an accomplished scholar? An injured man loses an advocate in a very different sense in which learning loses a scholar. Is it in perfect good taste to join together and to balance against each other the real heartbreaking sufferings of human beings and the figurative sufferings of an abstraction? I tell you just what strikes me at the moment. If you, on consideration, do not agree with me, I am probably wrong. I should not, at all events, have made so slight a remark on any but a short composition. In works of ten lines every syllable should be malignantly scrutinised. I will not

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plague you with my speculations on more important and exciting subjects. I will only say that it is impossible for any man to wish another better than I wish you.

From T. B. Macaulay

March 24, 1851.

To-day I called on Rogers and found him examining the inscription. I looked at it again, and I must say that I think that the word *bold*, between *ardent* and *intrepid*, and the word *kind*, between *courteous* and *benevolent*, may be spared.

*From Samuel Rogers*¹

March 27, 1851.

I cannot say how much I admire your inscriptions or how much they have affected me, nor would I alter a syllable, except perhaps in the instance which our friend Macaulay has pointed out. Yesterday by way of an experiment I changed the construction a little and it was all for the worse. But when you have two such writers under your roof you need not consult others. To one of them pray express my obligations for the beautiful Epistle she has sent me. May he to whom it is addressed be the better for it! He lives now in a nest of vipers who would sting him to death.

From Lord Lansdowne

April 11, 1851.

Many thanks to you, my dear J. Russell, for what you wrote to me the beginning of the week.² I did not want it to convince me your wish would be to lend yourself to whatever is best for me. The difficulty at present is to say what that is, for I find it difficult as yet to look steadily at the future. Tho' I was in some degree prepared for the blow it has not proved the less stunning. I know, however, that for my own good occupation must be found,

¹ The poet was now in his eighty-eighth year.

² On the death of Lady Lansdowne.

and an effort must be made, and shall prepare for it. My present intention is to go next week with Louisa Howard to the south of the Isle of Wight, where I have never been to stay, and then probably to Richmond before the end of the holidays, and I have written to Lingen to send me any education papers, etc., I can dispose out of town. Remember me affectionately to Lady John. I know well how a friendship which commenced almost with her childhood will cause her kind heart to sympathise with me.

From Lord Lansdowne

August 19, 1851.

Nobody can judge so well as you can yourself of the amount of assistance you might derive from the accession of Sir J. Graham to the Government in carrying on the business of the H. of Commons, or how far, which is equally material, it would neutralise any branch of the opposition there; and if you are quite satisfied on this point the question may be considered as settled, as no member of the Cabinet would, I think, positively withhold his acquiescence. To Graham personally I feel no objection—quite the contrary—but I cannot conceal from myself that there are two eventual dangers to be set against the advantage to be obtained from this connection, which were pretty obvious when this matter has been before under discussion, and I do not think recent circumstances have at all diminished them. I have always thought the present Government derived a portion of its security from the preference felt for most of them by a great part of the protectionist opposition, as compared with the Peelites, and more especially, Peelites of Graham's stamp. This will, of course, cease to operate. In the next place, the course of the next session will probably be such as naturally to bring out, and more perhaps than at any other period, the great defect (as we have seen exemplified on more than one occasion) of Graham's political character—that of hastily running

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before popular clamour than grappling with it. How far this may be guarded against by distinct previous explanation and understanding you will have to consider, when it is ascertained whether the official part of the arrangement is practicable. Otherwise what was intended to strengthen the Government would inevitably lead to some split, greater or less, in the Cabinet and its supporters. For myself I cannot too distinctly say that to any attempt at going beyond the principles which have hitherto regulated our reforms, in search of that which would not ultimately be obtained, popular favour, and in opposition to that which I believe to be the real sense of the country, I could never, in or out of office, be an acquiescing party. In one respect the time is favourable for negotiation. From the peculiarity of Graham's position the value of his services as political stock is constantly fluctuating, and at this moment it may be quoted rather lower than usual.

From Lord Palmerston

August 20, 1851.

I return you Lansdowne's letter, with which I very much agree. As your note to me seems to imply that you have made up your mind to make an offer to Graham, there is nothing more to be said on the subject, except by those (and I am not one) who may have a decided objection to serve with Graham. I confess, however, that I do not concur in the expediency of the step which you are going to take. There is no denying Graham's talents and acquirements, and his power as a speaker ; but for a person so gifted he is singularly unpopular personally, and destitute of political following either in or out of Parliament. I therefore doubt his giving any material accession of strength, beyond what he may bring in his own person ; and on the other hand the feelings which prevail against him may on his joining us weaken the attachment of some of our friends and increase the hostility of some of our opponents. He may no

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doubt himself be a useful gladiator in the arena of Parliamentary combat, but he has vulnerable points ; and he would have been a more useful auxiliary if he had been at the Pillars of Hercules instead of at his own Pillar during the last session. His great fault as a public man is that he is politically timid ; and like many timid politicians he often rushes headlong into measures which he inwardly disapproves in order to escape from some danger, the magnitude of which he overrates. He is an unsafe counsellor and guide ; he might be a safer assistant if he would allow himself to be guided by others, instead of trying to guide them, and if he would take counsel from experience and foresight instead of from fear. I think that people in general, and our own party especially, will be much surprised at this arrangement after the course which Graham took upon all great questions last session, when he was more hostile to the Government than almost anybody except some of the members of the Brass Band.

From Lord Minto

October 5, 1851.

I shall not only approve but rejoice in Granville's accession to the Cabinet. I have not had the same opportunity of forming an opinion of Seymour, but I have no doubt you have judged well also regarding him, and his wife's beauty will insure Lansdowne's approbation. It was not from you that Lansdowne first heard that Graham declined ; so he wrote to me before he had received your letter. He left us yesterday, and I am glad to say not at all inclined to strike work at present. Graham must, I think, have rested his refusal on the ground of the ballot, simply from his instinctive preference for an insincere and dishonest reason ; coupling it, however, with D'Israeli's recent language, it looks a little as if he swerved from his Radicals under the impression that the obstacles to a reunion of Peelites and Protectionists might be removed ere long, tho' I believe many of the

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latter would very much prefer to make a surrender of protection to us rather than to the other party. I am glad that you intend to stimulate Palmerston's Liberalism a little, both for Germany and Italy.

From Lord Granville ¹

October 10, 1851.

I cannot tell you how much obliged I am to you for the kind and flattering way in which you propose to me to join your Cabinet. It is extremely gratifying to me to receive this acknowledgment that you are satisfied with my endeavours to justify your choice of me for the office which I now hold, and I rejoice in being more closely connected in politics with one for whom I feel so much attachment and regard as yourself. I am on so pleasant a footing with Labouchere that I should be sincerely sorry to see him leave the Board of Trade, but in that case there is certainly no other Department over which I should be so glad to preside.

From Lord Shaftesbury ²

Dorset: October 16, 1851.

The papers state that you are returned to London, and consequently to the cares of Government, which must be somewhat increased by consideration of the wonderful peace, unity and prosperity we are enjoying (under God's blessing) lest anything should be done to uproot or even disturb it. The harvest, both in quantity and quality, has been unprecedented in these parts; the farmer's nature appears for a moment to be changed; and I have heard some of them use the language of 'piety.' I trust that 'Protection' has now received the *coup de grâce*; the repeal of the Corn Laws has marvellously improved the condition of the labouring classes in this county. I was turned out of the representation of it for so thinking and acting, but the result

¹ The second Earl, now thirty-six years of age.

² Lord Ashley had recently succeeded to the earldom.

is most beneficial. I am convinced, even on the short experience I have of my own property, that, if agriculture be not a thriving trade, it is the fault of the owners and occupiers. I rejoice that I have not deceived you respecting Ireland. I told you of the progress of Gospel Truth there; depend upon it, you have seen but the beginning. A mighty change is at hand, which if we seize it in a right spirit will deliver these realms from many difficulties and perils, and fit us, in God's providence, for great and good things in the history of mankind. But here I am recalled to deep and unutterable apprehensions. I tremble for this new Reform Bill; not so much for an immediate measure, *because I could propose a very conservative and yet liberal scheme*; but for the principle it involves of short intervals and frequent revision. The Duke your brother wrote to me a kind remonstrance against some words I was supposed to have used in reference to your movement in this affair. I may, it is true, in a moment of sorrow and fear, have said a hasty thing; but any word that implies a bad motive I fully retract; you see matters differently from me; and I am sure you are an honest man, and earnestly desire the temporal, social, and Christian welfare of the people you are called to govern. But I may without offence say 'be cautious.' Our institutions will not bear a rude shock; and altho' the present temper of the nation is loyal, aristocratical, and conservative, its 'goodness,' like Gloriana's, 'may be as a morning-cloud, and as the early dew it may go away.' May God prosper you and yours now and for ever.

From Lord Shaftesbury

November 8, 1851.

You are no doubt right in your view. You will have more to fear from *additions* than from *opposition* to your bill.¹ Yet I feel assured that if you make no

¹ Lord John was preparing his Reform Bill, which he introduced in the following session.

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concessions to Bright and his republican crew, you may entirely rely on the *great body* of the Conservative Party. You can have no jealousy of me, severed as I am from party, and moreover in the H. of Lords. I say this to prepare you for the request that, before you have finally determined all the provisions of your measure, you would let me have a few confidential words with you.

From Lord Minto

November 14, 1851.

Your notion of strengthening the small boroughs, if you must meddle with them, may possibly be better than my disfranchisement, but what is so gained in one quarter would be lost in another, and I think you would raise three sets of malcontents instead of only one ; first the little constituency to be swamped, second the liberal interest in the counties to be weakened, and lastly the Radicals, who would say you did too little. It is only the last of these complaints that you would have to encounter in dealing soberly with the suffrage without disturbing the existing distribution of seats, and it seems to me more easy to take your ground on that principle than you may find it to defend your measure when the question of remodelling the representation is once opened.

From Lord Shaftesbury

Manchester : November 26, 1851.

Chartism is dead in these parts ; the Ten Hours Act and cheap provisions have slain it outright. Often as I have seen this people, I never saw them so ardent, so affectionate, so enthusiastic. But then, praised be God, they are *morally* and physically improved. The children look lively and *young* ; a few years ago they looked weary and *old*. ‘Hae tibi erunt artes.’

From Lord Palmerston

December 6, 1851.

The more I think of the details which we are to consider to-day the more it seems to me to be desirable

that we should adhere to the limit of three hundred. Such an arrangement stands on a plain and consistent foundation, and is a redemption of a kind of pledge formerly given to Parliament. If we go beyond that we open a new chapter, with no rule to guide us and with no fixed principle to be carried out. If we begin ourselves to unsettle the arrangements of the Reform Bill, merely because we think that some changes would be an improvement, we open the door to any number of other changes which other parties may think to be greater improvements; while on the other hand by a new schedule A of large amount we shall excite much discontent among both Whigs and Tories, without at all satisfying Radicals; and we shall thus add, apparently without necessity, to our difficulties.

To Lord Lansdowne

December 8, 1851.

The question of contributing boroughs is, I own, a very difficult one. But I have yielded my own first impressions to what is, I believe, a general opinion (though not universal) among our friends that the small boroughs as at present constituted cannot stand. I therefore take the most ready mode of preserving them; I believe the first line of entrenchments cannot be defended, and that the second can. I do not see any chance of carrying the Bill as a Minister without your assistance. If therefore you insist on resigning, I shall tender my resignation along with yours, and propose the plan agreed to by the Cabinet as a private member of Parliament. But I cannot conceal from myself that I should have little chance of success. It will be the story of the Corn Laws over again. The Tories would be successful in resisting Reform this year, and in a shorter time than three years the small boroughs would be swept away. I should only have the poor consolation of thinking that I had done my best to avert such a catastrophe. It does not seem to me that your part is so difficult as

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you suppose. If the Bill does not pass the House of Commons your difficulty vanishes. If it does pass you can then recommend it as the Bill of the Commons, and the settlement of a difficult question.

From Lord Palmerston

December 10, 1851.

I am sorry for the decision you have taken to disturb so large a number of Boroughs. The measure seems to me unnecessary to that extent, and not good in itself and sure to raise up a great amount of personal opposition which might otherwise have been avoided. This was not part of your own plan, but comes from Ellice through Charles Wood, who last year was one of the most adverse to any meddling with the Reform Bill. I apprehend that your proposed reduction of the County Franchise will bring a considerable number of town men to vote for Counties, and thus alter to a certain degree the existing balance, and the extension of the Borough Clustering plan is to add to this change. Now no one can justly say after the Repeal of the Corn Laws and the alteration of the Navigation Laws, to say nothing of other changes, that the commercial and manufacturing interest has not effective weight in the House of Commons; and it seems to me that in making changes in our Constitution we ought to look to the great and permanent interests of the country rather than to momentary considerations or individual opinions.

From Lord Shaftesbury

February 24, 1852.

Allow me to say a few parting words. I heartily wish that you had given us another kind of Parliamentary Reform Bill. You could have done so with equal liberality and far more safety. But that is not my object. It is to thank you sincerely for many excellent and invaluable appointments in Church matters. No

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, 1846-51

Prime Minister has ever surpassed you ; nay, I do not believe, has equalled you. There may have been an exception or so ; but I speak of the mass of your nominations. May the recollection of them be a comfort to you in after-life, as the fact will be honourable to your name ! I thank you also for much personal courtesy and kindness to myself.

CHAPTER VIII

IRELAND AFTER THE FAMINE

EVEN after the worst of the famine was over, Ireland continued for a time to claim a larger share of the Prime Minister's attention than any other domestic or foreign problem. Lord Clarendon, who accepted what Lord John described as 'the difficult and odious task of the Lieutenancy' in May, 1847, spent the remainder of the year in struggling against hunger and outrage.¹ 'I feel as if I was at the head of a Provisional Government in a half-conquered country,' he wrote on October 23. While meeting most of the Viceroy's demands for fresh powers for dealing with crime, Lord John never forgot that the Irish problem was not to be solved by coercion, and that the land system was the root of the trouble. In 1848 the Encumbered Estates Act was passed in order to replace landlords unable to fulfil their duties by solvent purchasers who might be expected to develop the resources of the country. The hopes of the authors of the Act, however, remained unfulfilled; for in many cases the new landowner, finding his property occupied by a swarm of pauper tenants, freely exercised his legal rights and commenced possession by wholesale evictions. The evil results were intensified by the failure of the Government's proposal of compensation for tenants' improvements, which was referred to a special Committee and smothered by interested obstruction.

¹ See Maxwell, *Life of the Fourth Earl of Clarendon*. For the Irish side of the story see Gavan Duffy, *Young Ireland*, and Dillon, *Life of John Mitchel*.

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The Year of Revolutions brought alarming moments to Ireland no less than to England. In withdrawing from an active share in the Repeal movement, O'Connell declared that no political improvement was worth a drop of human blood ; but he had passed away in 1847, and his views were not shared by the younger spokesmen of Irish nationalism, who were ready both to die and to kill, and who derived encouragement from the risings reported from many parts of Europe. In April the Viceroy's hands were strengthened by the Treason Felony Act, which declared the new offence of treason felony punishable by transportation and made seditious speaking a crime. The Act was at once put into operation against John Mitchel, who had summoned his countrymen to ' sweep the island clear of the English name and nation,' and who was sentenced to transportation for fourteen years. The Government next struck at the Young Ireland leaders, who, with the doubtful exception of Gavan Duffy, urged the people to rise. Smith O'Brien, after a collision with the police, was transported, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in July, and by the end of the summer the rebel leaders were under lock and key.

Scarcely any blood had been shed, but the country was seething with discontent. After the close of the session, Lord John paid a flying visit to Dublin and discussed the situation with the Viceroy. For the fourth year in succession the potato crop was a partial failure, and it was clear that emigration on a large scale was essential in an over-populated country. The Prime Minister was no less anxious to assist the Catholic clergy who suffered from the prevailing distress, and by Clarendon's advice he discussed concurrent endowment with Redington, the Under-Secretary, himself a Catholic.

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A sum of half a million, he suggested, might be raised by fresh taxation in Ireland for the endowment of the clergy, and a further sum for emigration and the relief of the poorest unions. Redington reminded him that the Presbyterians would stoutly resist taxation for the Catholic clergy, and suggested as an alternative the partial disendowment of the Irish Church, which the Prime Minister in turn felt it impossible to recommend. Being thus unable to devise a practicable scheme for helping the clergy, Lord John fell back on emigration, but his scheme met with resistance. Finally, in 1849, since the income-tax had not yet been extended to Ireland, a temporary rate was levied for the relief of distress, and further relief was afforded in 1850 by prolonging the period for the repayment of British loans. The Queen's visit in 1849 proved a spectacular success, and the franchise was slightly enlarged in 1850; but the most urgent and difficult of Irish problems, the reform of the land system, had to wait for its solution till fresh struggles convinced a later generation of its necessity.

From Lord Clarendon

February 5, 1848.

I have seen the Chief Justice since his return; he seems well satisfied, as indeed he has a right to be, with the service he has rendered, and like everyone else he thinks that the success of the Commission has been complete in arresting the progress of crime and restoring confidence to the well disposed. If this had not taken place he quite agrees in the opinion I expressed to you last November, that the whole of Ireland would shortly have been in the same state as the districts at that time disturbed. He says, however, that he has returned to Dublin with a more painful conviction than when he left it of the utterly demoralised condition of the people.

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Their indifference to crime of every description, but more particularly that of murder, and carelessness about distinguishing between right and wrong are he considers very alarming symptoms for the future ; and although the law is now vindicated and the people admit the necessity of succumbing to it, yet we must be prepared for occasional outbreaks until the entire social system undergoes a change. Idleness and political agitation are, I apprehend, the main causes of these evils, and until the people can get more employment and consequently more industrious habits they will always be the prey of agitators and the bane of Governments.

To Sir Charles Wood

February 6, 1848.

I do not much like the notion of giving up the repayment for the Labour Rate Act. 1. It would encourage the belief that nothing was to be repaid in Ireland. 2. The Irish received the value of the money, not in mending their roads, but in saving the lives of their people. 3,000,000 of people at one time lived on the wages thus obtained. 3. We have already remitted half. Lord Bessborough said, 'Remit as much as you can, but get back the rest, and if you give that up the people will never again believe they are to repay anything.'

From Lord Clarendon

March 30, 1848.

I cannot say that our position here improves. There may be no immediate outbreak ; but the *determination to rebel* is manifesting itself more and more throughout the country, and my expectation that an outbreak will be averted is diminishing. In ordinary times we might safely reckon upon our ordinary means for preserving tranquillity, but in the present state of Europe, and when such strange and unexpected events have happened everywhere, it is difficult to say upon whom we can rely

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and impossible to foresee the issue of the struggle. I feel cruelly embarrassed by the almost total absence of *law* for repressing sedition, or checking revolutionary preparations now carried on publicly, daringly, and with perfect impunity to the terror and discouragement of the well disposed. An indictment for treason is hopeless, a prosecution for sedition is all but useless, as what care O'Brien and Mitchell for an imprisonment that will make martyrs of them and a fine that others will pay for them? We cannot put down all these Rifle Clubs, or prevent the importation and possession of arms, or the private practice in their use, or the secret enrolment of people for a National Guard. In short the Government is nearly powerless, and I suppose if we were to ask Parliament to strengthen our hands it would either be refused or delayed until too late. If before Xmas an Arms Bill, merely as a Police regulation, for which I was so desirous, had been passed, much of the present danger and difficulty would have been avoided. My great object is to check the spread of disaffection, and that will best be done by relieving distress which causes much of the bad feeling now, and if we can pay off a revolution in that way it will be an economy. Thanks for Normanby's dispatch.

Memorandum by Lord Grey ¹

March 30, 1848.

I feel as strongly as Lord John Russell the alarming character of the present crisis, but I somewhat doubt the expediency of any hurried legislation, or rather attempt to legislate. Upon his different suggestions I think that whatever is requisite under No. 1 should be introduced as changes in the Landlord and Tenant bill, but I believed that bill already to contain all that the Irish Govt. and lawyers thought practicable in this sense. To 2 and 3 I see no objection. As to 4 my belief is

¹ Comments on the Prime Minister's Memorandum, printed by Walpole, ii. 60-61.

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that the debates such a proposal would occasion and the amount of all other legislation would do more harm than the measure if carried could do good. Otherwise I should be very glad of it. Of 5 in principle I entirely approve; but whether it is practicable at this moment to add to the burthens upon Irish land I doubt, and I should prefer postponing the measure till next year, in the mean time and without delay endeavouring to arrange in concert with the Catholic Hierarchy and the Pope, the details of a plan to be then brought forward with their assent.

Memorandum by Lord Lansdowne

March 30, 1848.

The danger in Ireland appears to me to be both great and imminent and inconvenient, and one upon which therefore any legislative measures which require time to pass will have no effect. The remedial measures now announced should of course be proceeded in without delay, and any that can be proved to be necessary to preserve the public peace and can be urged thro' Parliament on that ground introduced immediately. The payment of the priests in some shape is of the utmost importance, but cannot be hurried through in a moment, and should (I think with Lord Grey) be preceded by communications with Rome. The time too is peculiarly unfavourable for settling how the charge is to be defrayed. One of the greatest dangers in Ireland (*v.* Lord Clarendon's letters) is from the impoverished Irish gentry whose assistance is wanted, and must on no account be further alienated. Volunteer Corps should, I think, be encouraged, it being understood that Govt. names all the Officers, and selects the localities.

Memorandum by Lord Palmerston

March 31, 1848.

The questions mooted in Lord John Russell's letter are of great importance and urgency, but require to be

most fully considered. The main and most pressing question is whether the Government should now at once ask for additional powers from Parliament or wait not for a really stronger, but for a more generally understood case. If such powers are asked from Parliament, some remedial measures ought to accompany them; and in any case well devised measures of that kind would be useful. If additional and extraordinary powers are asked for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act would no doubt be the most effectual and the easiest obtained, and with it might be coupled a power to send foreigners out of the United Kingdom in cases of well founded suspicion. I should be disposed to doubt, however, whether the Public are yet sufficiently aware of the real extent of the danger existing in Ireland, and whether therefore the House of Commons would pass a Suspension Bill in the way in which it ought to be passed. If the Bill were to be opposed by any large number of persons, and if it were to lead to long debates and repeated discussions, the advantage of proposing it would be doubtful. There ought to be such a stateable case or such a general sense of the necessity of the measure that the Bill should be supported by an overwhelming majority. That we shall be obliged sooner or later to make the proposal is manifest. The question is whether we shall lose more by the progress of sedition while we are waiting for a stronger and more public case, or whether we shall gain more by the restraint which even an application to Parliament might impose on the proceedings of the conspirators. According to all appearances, days and not weeks will suffice to determine this question.

With respect to the proposed remedial measures it seems to me that any interference with the right of ejectment should be carefully guarded so as not practically to impair the right of property. Ejectments ought to be made without cruelty in the manner of making them; but it is useless to disguise the truth that any great improvement in the social system of Ireland must

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be founded upon an extensive change in the present state of agrarian occupation, and that this change necessarily implies a long continued and systematic ejectment of Small Holders and of Squatting Cottiers.

The Measures 2 and 3 would be useful, if financially easy.

With respect to 5 I conceive a provision for the Priesthood to be as indispensable for the permanent tranquillity of Ireland as a change in the system of agrarian occupation ; and I do not think that any sensible Irish proprietor would, even in the present impoverished condition of Ireland, object to a land tax of £400,000 a year spread over the whole surface of the country for such a purpose.

Perhaps it might be best to have some confidential communication with the Court of Rome before the proposal is made to Parliament. We might possibly obtain from the Pope a consent to some arrangement of a useful kind which might be asked from him in return for such a boon to his clergy.

Memorandum by Sir Charles Wood

March 31, 1848.

1. I understand Lord John's proposal as to ejectment to refer to such ejectments as Mr. Blake's. I see no objection to such a measure as would require notice to the cottiers some days before it is proposed to remove them, and some provision for ensuring relief under the poor law, as soon as they are turned out houseless and destitute on the world.

2. The bill and minute as drawn.

3. The main objection to this is the unwillingness of the H. of C. to pay the interest on the sum raised. I somewhat doubt the efficacy of the relief afforded by it, that is as applied to the worst parts of Ireland, where it seems to me that the landlords are hardly in a condition to avail themselves of any loan. Probably half the sum is as much as they would use.

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4. I do not think that there are any circumstances *as yet* calling for so strong a measure as suspending the Habeas Corpus. I think it is the right measure when the time for it is come ; but asking for such a measure ought to be delayed to the last moment. I am by no means convinced of the probability of an outbreak ; and unless things are changed very much, on the return of the deputation from Paris, I see no need of extraordinary powers beyond the law. We saw in the autumn the advantage of proposing a measure so moderate as to carry all the Irish members, except the very extreme party, with us, and we ought to endeavour to take our time in preparing a strong measure so as to secure the same concurrence on the part of the Irish members. I should be sorry to carry it by Saxon votes against a large body of Irish members. That, I think, would materially injure the effect of the measure, independently of the irritation produced in Ireland during the discussion. I am therefore against this measure at present.

5. However right it may be to pay the R.C. priests, I think there are several objections to doing it at present in this way. I think that to propose to do it by a land tax now would raise opposition in a country groaning under the present pressure of payment, and the priests might be forced to repudiate the action of receiving anything. This country will not and ought not to pay ; but I rather agree with Grey that we ought to ascertain through Rome how far the R.C. priesthood are disposed to take money and in what way.

From H. Labouchere

April, 1848.

I will come to town on Wednesday morning and call upon you. What you say about Ireland is true enough. 'Nec vitia nec remedia pati possumus,' is the cry of that unfortunate country. The inveteracy of the disease proceeds from the remedies never having been applied in time. Had a good Poor Law been passed and the

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Ecclesiastical System put to rights some time ago, I believe that things would not have come to such a pass. You have done the first, and I hope will do the second. It has more to do with the topsy turvy condition of everything in Ireland than we generally suppose. I was much struck when I was there with the *social* inferiority of the Catholics even in Dublin, and with the soreness which this engenders. How much worse must it be in the provinces! This is why I always like to hear of Catholic Chancellors, Peers, Privy Counsellors, and the like.

From Lord Palmerston

April 7, 1848.

Ought we not to do something about the arming in Ireland, which is avowedly carried on for the purpose of civil war? We interposed last autumn to prevent individual assassination; ought we to sit quiet and permit preparations for wholesale murder? Why should we not propose a short Bill giving to the Lord Lieutenant the power of applying by Proclamation to any part of Ireland (Dublin not excepted) the provisions in the Act of this session about arms and weapons, without it being necessary as a groundwork of such Proclamation that any murders should have been committed?

From Lord Campbell

April, 1848.

Since we separated I have been turning in my mind the proper mode of dealing with the Irish 'Confederates,' and, the subject being so important, I send you the result of my deliberations. After the opinions given by the Chancellor and the Attorney General in Ireland all notion of prosecuting for high treason under the existing laws must be abandoned, and I do not think that it would be expedient simply to extend 36 Geo. 3, c. 7, to Ireland. The Whig party strongly (and I think reasonably) objected both in 1796 and in 1817 to the new offences

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created by that Act being made high treason, contending that we should abide by the old 'Statute of Treasons,' 25 Edw. 3; and when the punishment of death has been abolished in France for all political offences, a clamour might be excited if you were to propose that Irishmen should now for the first time be liable to be hanged, beheaded, drawn and quartered, for what they have hitherto been allowed to do with impunity. Besides you have no desire to proceed against them capitally, and, prosecuting them according to the forms prescribed in high treason, you give them the last chance to escape. My plan is this. Repeal 36 Geo. 3 and 57 Geo. 3 making it perpetual, and frame a new Act for the whole of the United Kingdom by which these offences (a conspiracy to levy war, etc.) shall be made *felony*, punishable with transportation for fourteen years or for life. Thus, while you would have the glory of mitigating the severity of the penal code, you would be armed with the effectual means of sending Messrs. Mitchel, Meager, and Smith O'Brien to Botany Bay.

From Sir Charles Wood

May 20, 1848.

We have all made up our minds, as I believe, that portions of unencumbered estates ought to be sold, and that there is no real prospect of regeneration and substantial amendment for Ireland till substantial proprietors possessed of capital and will to improve their estates are introduced into that country. We have brought in a bill for selling portions of these estates, and I have never heard anybody recede from the opinion that this was one of the most practical measures for the real and permanent improvement of the country.

From Lord Normanby

July 20, 1848.

I am very glad to see that amongst the salvage from the storms of the session will be found the Encumbered

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Estates (Ireland) Bill.¹ You there certainly strike at the root of the peculiar evil of the social system in Ireland. This is no new opinion of mine. I wrote upon the subject either to you or to Melbourne as long ago as when I was in Ireland, and urged the advantage of establishing some closer connection between the money savings of the middle classes, mostly Catholics, and the interests involved in the actual possession of the land.

To Sir Charles Wood

August 13, 1848.

Clarendon, in his letter to-day, asks what we propose to do in the event of a deficiency (almost certain) of the potato crop. We must consider this subject seriously to-morrow. I am disposed to think that we ought not to make any general announcement. But where the Poor Rates exceed 15s. in the pound, or where it is quite *impossible* to collect rates sufficient to feed the destitute poor, we should come to the aid of the Unions, at the time when their supplies are exhausted. I do not know whether you have seen these various accounts of Trevelyan. The whole is very bad. Any loans that may be made should be not for pauper labour, but for useful works which are of the kind the Loan Committee would sanction. At the same time I think we should order arrangements to be made for reducing 3000 men in the Navy before the next 31 March. If the crops are bad and the potatoes fail we must import foreign grain to a large amount, and the Bank directors ought to *raise their rate of interest*. I am inclined to think we should give them a hint to this effect on Tuesday.

From Lord Clarendon

August 21, 1848.

The High Sheriff has just been here to speak to me about the recent trials and the difficulties he has had to

¹ Lord Normanby had been Lord-Lieutenant, 1835-1839.

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encounter. In the first place upwards of fifty highly respectable persons came to him and offered to pay a fine of £100 not to be put on the panel, and as a specimen of the terror inspired by the thought of having to serve he said that when a summons was left at a man's house his wife went into violent convulsions, and a surgeon certified that her life would be endangered if her husband was on the jury. He told me that all the men who tried Mitchel have suffered severely and some of them are quite ruined. Fletcher, the man on whom the Confederates reckoned, and who held out but afterwards yielded, has been the special object of animosity, and even to this day whisky is given gratis to the lowest blackguards to go into his shop and insult him. Another man was in his shop when a respectable looking, well-dressed lady came in and said she wished to speak to him in private. He asked her to go into his parlour when she spit in his face and said, Take that for what you did to Mitchell. I repeat these things to you as they indicate the feelings of the middle classes here, and it is clear that, as both the High Sheriff and Mr. Penefeather say, whether from disaffection or intimidation, trial by jury for political offences is at an end in Dublin.

*To Mr. Redington*¹

Vice Regal Lodge : September 6, 1848.

Lord Clarendon wishes me to write to you respecting the preparation of a measure for the payment of the Roman Catholic Clergy. It must be considered that no such measure should be proposed without a very good prospect of its being carried. It is not one of those measures which may be thrown into the air and is sure to light somewhere and bring forth fruit in another season. A proposal to endow the Catholic Clergy is sure to raise up all the clamour against the Catholic religion in its most offensive form, and if that clamour is successful no subsequent measure nor even the same

¹ The Under-Secretary.

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measure carried another year would reconcile Protestant and Catholic. The defeat of an opposition upon this ground would on the other hand subdue a great deal of bigotry, and religious equality might thenceforth be acknowledged as the practical rule of Government. Attaching therefore the utmost importance to success, I look to the means by which that success is to be obtained. I should say 1. That the Pope must be an informed and consenting party, but not by any concordat or formal agreement. 2. The provision to be made must be sufficient and not such as to make it necessary to introduce another measure as a supplement. 3. A fair though not a rigid or literal equality should be established between the three Churches, Episcopal, Catholic, and Presbyterian. 4. The provision must be made by a separate tax on Ireland and not out of the Consolidated Fund.

From Lord Lansdowne

October 29, 1848.

A great effort is to be made if practicable to effect a permanent improvement in the social and political state of Ireland. In both senses the most essential element in that improvement must be a provision for the R.C. Clergy. To arrange and to sanction that provision the Pope's concurrence is indispensable, which it may be hoped will be obtained, tho' the recently received rescript from Rome is far from encouraging. Not that I read it exactly as the *Times* does, or consider it to emanate so much from the Pope as from the 'propaganda' which it is not in his power to control. Assuming, however, that concurrence to be obtained, the next questions that arise are whence that provision is to be derived, in what way can it be rendered most palatable to those at whose expense it is to be made. To obtain it from the consolidated fund, altho' the object may be fairly considered to be as much national as Irish, is supposed to be impossible. To obtain it by so considerable

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an addition as would be required to local rates, against the recent increase of which there already prevails so strong a feeling, would put every class of Irish landowners in violent opposition not only to the measure but to the Government. To seek to obtain it by so appropriating repayments under the relief and other recent acts would be uncertain both as to time and to amount, and inadequate to the purpose except upon a very reduced scale ; although, failing any other mode, it might with that reduction be entertained. There appears then only to remain an extension of the Property Tax to Ireland for Irish objects, including this, and great as I have always felt, and I believe you have felt, the objections to an Income Tax as a tax upon improvement to be, and more particularly in all respects as applying to Ireland, I am not prepared to say that these difficulties must not be encountered, both as respects the principle and the detail, if it affords a fair prospect of placing the peace and prosperity of the country on a sounder basis.

From Lord Clarendon

February 6, 1849.

I am sorry to hear that you are to have so much trouble with the Suspension Act, though I am sure that the opposition of the Irish members will be dishonest ; for they know as well as I do that it is indispensable for the peace and future prospects of the country, and all of them except the adventurers, who are not few, would be in despair if their opposition proved successful. I certainly did not expect that they would find a supporter in Stanley. Everybody here whose opinion is worth having rejoices at the prospect of the Act being renewed ; but we get no support from the Press (the *Evening Post* excepted), which I believe would consider that it entirely failed in its vocation if it ever published anything useful or true. I need not say that I agree with Graham about remedial measures. We are miserably short in them, and notwithstanding the state of our finances, I think that some

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loans might have been made, because three years' famine and a new tax which has produced, without any return to those who paid it, hard upon two millions in a twelve-month, have exhausted the reproductive means of the country, and employment is the thing most needed at this moment. A loan for arterial drainage *e.g.* would give an enormous deal of employment, would reclaim a great deal of land, would be repaid without difficulty, and would be a profit rather than a loss to the Exchequer, as it would be borrowed at a less rate than it would be lent. The doling out money or food merely to keep the people alive is a most uneconomical process, for it will do nobody any permanent good and will secure the same thing having to be done over again next year and perhaps to a larger amount.

To Lord Lansdowne

February 9, 1849.

I should be very glad if I could find a way to obviate your objections to my plan for Ireland. I would propose then: that an income and property tax of 6*d.* in the pound be levied on all incomes above £100 a year, and 3*d.* on all incomes from £60 to £100. I think this is nearly the proportion of Mr. Pitt's Income Tax. Having thus satisfied one part of the demands of the House of Commons, I would propose to take your scheme of giving for Emigration part of the sum thus derived.

From Lord Lansdowne

February, 1849.

I scarcely know whether what passed in the Cabinet yesterday is to be considered as a final decision in favour of a general poor rate in aid, but if it is, it seems to me that I hardly ought to attend future Cabinets, or to appear as the representative of the Government in a committee of enquiry, where I should be precluded from the exercise of my own judgment on the most difficult subject they have to investigate. How could I indeed with any

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success endeavour to remove the objections of others, or disguise my own, to a plan which, though it offers some momentary facility, is, I am convinced (and not more so than some other members of the Government), founded on principles which are radically false and dangerous ?

To Lord Lansdowne

February 12, 1849.

I hope you will not think of retiring from the Cabinet. I fear at this moment it might be fatal to us, and I do not well see the means of forming another Government. I do not think the Cabinet will alter its decision. The prevailing opinion appeared to be against an income tax, and with such an opinion it would be hard work to get it through the House of Commons.

From Lord Lansdowne

February 15, 1849.

As there was no formal minute taken of the decision of the cabinet yesterday evening, to which, if there had been I should have added one, stating with what understanding and on what grounds I reluctantly acquiesced in one part of the scheme adopted, I think it as well to repeat them shortly in a letter to you, which as I shall keep a copy of it will answer the same purpose. To the rate in aid on Unions towards the support of electoral districts as they are so arranged under the new subdivision (which I assume will be found unexceptionable) I see no objection but its tendency possibly in some cases to relax individual efforts. I trust, however, under the limitation proposed, it will not to any considerable degree. To a measure so unjust as that of taxing the land, and the land exclusively, throughout one part of the kingdom, towards the relief of the poor in particular districts with which it is unconnected, and without reference to the real inequalities of income and situation of its proprietors, I can reconcile myself only by considering the absolute urgency of fixing some maximum without

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delay to the amount of local taxation in particular districts, without which all capital and industry will cease to exist there; and by the assurance that this anomalous and exceptional measure will be defended on no other grounds, that the amount will be strictly limited to 6*d.* in the pound, the probable amount of an income tax, for each of two years to come, or if it is preferred to a shilling in the pound on the two taken together, and that the most distinct pledge will be given as far as Government can give it that no attempt will be made to prolong it, but that if, contrary to the hope which may be entertained, due precautions are taken to secure this relief being judiciously and honestly administered, further necessity should arise for assistance, it will be provided on a broader basis and a more equitable system.

From Lord Palmerston

August 5, 1849.

I shall be much mistaken in Paddy's character if the Queen is not satisfied with the demonstration of joy and loyalty with which her arrival in Ireland will be greeted.

From Lord Lansdowne

Dublin: August 9, 1849.

Thanks to Clarendon's excellent tact, the fineness of the weather, and I must add the inexhaustible fund of good humour of the people here when it is not perverted for mischievous purposes, everything here has gone off to admiration. The Queen herself has, by her manner, given universal satisfaction, omitting nothing that could please, so that the feeling in her favour has gone on crescendo from the moment of her arrival. Joseph Hume may complain of the quantity of gunpowder that has been wasted, but it has been drowned in the volleys of shouting which cost nothing and have their value here. The address of the (non-malignant) Catholic bishops was the best of any and the feeling with which old Murray read it quite affecting.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONAL DEFENCE

DURING the closing months of his Premiership, Peel had begun to turn an attentive ear to the repeated warnings addressed to him by Wellington in regard to national defence. Though he had cordially approved the *entente cordiale* established by Aberdeen and Guizot, he doubted whether Louis Philippe and his Minister could long continue to hold in check the bellicose spirit of the French Press. The stormy session of 1846, however, was occupied with the Corn Laws controversy, and when the Government fell in June no steps had been taken to meet the danger of invasion. The Duke promptly addressed himself to Lord John, with whom he established and maintained the most cordial relations. The seed fell on fruitful ground. Palmerston, whose influence in the Cabinet was second only to that of the Prime Minister, and whose office enabled him to estimate the danger from France, was no less eager than the Commander-in-Chief to strengthen the defences of the south coast against a raid. Steam, he declared, had bridged the Channel; and though it was pointed out by the rival school that steam facilitated the defence no less than the attack, the Foreign Minister besieged his chief with memoranda of portentous length, written with his own hand and couched in terms of extreme urgency. The embitterment created by the Spanish marriages increased his apprehensions, and he vigorously supported the demand for the strengthening of the coast defences and

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the formation of a militia. His alarms were in some degree shared by Lord Minto, the father-in-law of the Prime Minister, and by Lord Auckland, First Lord of the Admiralty. Sir Charles Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the other hand, like most of his colleagues, declined to be seriously perturbed, and reminded his chief of the state of the finances, the depression of trade, and the commitments of the Irish famine.

Despite renewed representations from the Duke and Palmerston, the Cabinet found no opportunity during the session of 1847, which was interrupted by a General Election, to introduce a Militia Bill; but at the end of the session Lord John recommended to his colleagues a plan for the revival of the force. Discussions of this and other schemes continued throughout the recess, Fox Maule, the Secretary at War, asking for a smaller measure than his chief proposed, and Palmerston for a larger. The anxieties of the Government became public property at the opening of 1848, when a private letter from Wellington to Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector-General of Fortifications, found its way into print. Except under the fire of Dover Castle, he declared, there was not a spot from the North Foreland to Selsey Bill where infantry might not land at any tide, with any wind, and in any weather. Lord John now worked out a new and more ambitious scheme, which went far to satisfy Palmerston; but no agreement was reached on the details of a measure bristling with difficulties and involving the unpopular expedient of the militia ballot. It was decided to increase the army, the navy, and the ordnance estimates and to apply £150,000 to 'laying the foundation of a militia force'; but the situation was complicated by the existence of a heavy deficit, which it

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was proposed to meet by raising the income-tax from sevenpence to a shilling.

The publication of the Duke's letter had naturally created a panic ; but the alarm was quenched as quickly as it had arisen, not by the sarcasms of Cobden, but by the cold douche of an extra fivepence on the income-tax and by the overthrow of Louis Philippe. With the King of France a refugee on English soil, it was no longer the danger of invasion, but the convulsions of Europe, that filled the thoughts of Parliament and the public. The estimates for the navy and ordnance were decreased, the reorganisation of the militia was dropped, and the income-tax remained at sevenpence. The revulsion of public feeling was complete. In place of an increase, the naval and military estimates declined till they touched the lowest point since the fall of the Melbourne Ministry in 1841. Neither Palmerston nor the Duke ceased their warnings ; but it was not till France gained a new master on December 2, 1851, that the Militia Bill emerged from its pigeon-hole and that the public once again began to concern itself with the problem of national defence.

From the Duke of Wellington

August 12, 1846.

I received your letter of the 11th last night upon my return home, and I have this morning seen and conversed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His report of the conversation and this communication will show your Lordship that your mind and mine are travelling in the same direction on the subjects to which your letter refers. These subjects are not exactly my official business. But having long been accustomed to the operations of war, and to consider the attack and defence of coasts and frontiers, it was naturally expected that I should give my

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opinion upon them when I was a member of H.M. Council ; and I devoted much attention to them, and corresponded with and gave my opinion to Sir Robert Peel upon all these points to which your letters refer ; and to the late Master-General of the Ordnance upon some points in relation to the coast defences ; and to the late Secretary of State, Sir James Graham, upon others in relation to the defences of the Channel and Norman Islands. In the course of the last autumn between the months of August and November I visited in detail the whole coast of the Channel from the North Foreland to Selsea Bill, and several military positions as well upon the coast and in the interior of the country, and corresponded upon them with Sir Robert Peel and the Master-General of the Ordnance. I shall be ready to give your Lordship and your colleagues the same assistance as I gave to Her Majesty's late servants ; and I shall consider that I am equally performing my duty to the Sovereign and the Publick. I enclose your Lordship a Memorandum which may be of use to you in the consideration of this and will show you of what importance I consider it.

From Lord Minto

St. Leonards : September 10, 1846.

I don't know if the inspiration comes from the sea under our windows, but I cannot resist the desire to say a serious word or two upon the present weakness of our fleet, as a subject to which the attention of the Admiralty should, I think, be directed without delay. It cannot be right or safe that in every quarter where we have great interests in jeopardy, we should be found inferior and helpless on our own element, and unprovided with any such reserve at home as might enable us to reinforce a distant station without leaving our own shores unprotected. Yet this is truly now our condition, and we very sensibly feel the effects of it in our foreign relations. I know that Auckland must have some difficulty to

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encounter arising out of the vicious system introduced under the late administration ; a little energy and determination will, however, suffice to enable him to replace the Navy upon a respectable footing. We have got everything that is required for this purpose ; men and money more than sufficient have been voted by Parliament, and it only remains that they should be applied to the best advantage.

From Lord Palmerston

November 5, 1846.

I inclose an abstract copied by me from a return of arms in store, which Charles Fox lent me the other day. You will see that we are as scantily supplied with muskets as with other means of defence ; and, if we can afford it, we ought to make a hundred thousand percussion muskets each year for two or for three years to come. The annual consumption of muskets by wear and tear is something considerable, and there ought always to be 300,000 in store to arm the Militia, volunteers and augmentation of the Line in the event of war. Vivian in 1839 or 1840 had made arrangements for manufacturing every year 40 or 50,000 percussion muskets ; but I should think that the late Government must have suspended that arrangement, or the number in store would have been much greater. It would be very desirable also that our chief deposit of arms and stores should be in a central and inland position like Weedon, and not at the Tower or at Woolwich, where they might be taken by a *coup de main* in three days or even less by a French force landed on the coast of Sussex. The sea shore towers and batteries suggested by the Duke of Wellington, and the steamers and blockships getting ready by the Admiralty, are excellent and necessary things ; but a French steam squadron might elude the latter, or overpower the small portion of them which in a few hours would be assembled at any given point. And if 25,000 men were to be landed in two or three divisions on our coast, those

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towers and batteries would kill a good many of them, but would no more prevent the successful landing of the great majority of them than the batteries of the Sikhs prevented our infantry from marching up and taking the guns. These means of defence may beat off a small force or harass a large one, but cannot stop a strong body of troops.

It seems to me, therefore, absolutely necessary to provide some armed body of men to meet 20,000 Frenchmen on shore and in our country, and perhaps I might have said 30 instead of 20,000. If we were to add 10,000 men to our regular army, that augmentation would soon dwindle away and be scattered about so as not to be capable of being brought rapidly together, and at all events would only be a force of 10,000 men for the whole of the United Kingdom, and if it was kept together within the country on the Home station in time of peace, and when no immediate prospect of war was before us. People would grow disgusted at the sight of so many apparently useless soldiers, and a constant pressure would be made upon the Government to reduce them; but the same money which those 10,000 men in constant pay would cost would give us 100,000 Militia trained a month in every year, and after the first year probably only half would require to be called out at a time, so that the expense for each year would be only one half. This force would give no disgust while it was not wanted, and whenever the time might come when it was wanted it would give you 100,000 (I am speaking now of this island only) instead of 10,000, and though of course inferior in quality, yet good enough for many purposes, and soon fit to be mixed up, when permanently embodied, with troops of the line. This is the only great country that has no force of this kind. The United States, France, Germany, have all of them large Militias or forces of an analogous kind. We alone of all great nations have out of 26 millions of people not more within the realm trained to the use of arms and capable

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of turning out usefully to defend the country than about 40,000 regulars of all kinds and 20,000 pensioners, and this scattered all over the two islands. France has her 340,000 regulars, her million of enrolled National Guards, of which upwards of 200,000 are trained and disciplined (80,000 in Paris alone). She has a million of muskets in store and probably 40 large steamers, each of which could carry 1200 men. Comparing our present prepared means of defence with her means of attacks, we may say of England *stat magni nominis umbra*.

From Lord Palmerston

December 17, 1846.

I send you two Memorandums which I would wish to submit to your very serious consideration. The one is written by Sir John Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Fortification, an officer of much practical experience in war and of considerable personal ability. The other contains reflections which have suggested themselves to myself.¹ The statements which my paper contains about the defensive condition of our dockyards are the result of a conversation which I had with Sir John Burgoyne, with the ordnance maps before us. Burgoyne in his paper imagines one method by which the French might in the first few months of a war acquire for a fortnight the naval command of the Channel ; but there is another way in which they might leave us a choice between that or another great reverse. They might send out a strong fleet with troops to the West Indies ; and then we must either dispatch the whole of our Line of Battleships in commission to save our colonies, or we must keep them at home to defend our coasts. If we kept them at home we should probably lose the greater part if not the whole of our West Indian possessions ; if we sent our fleet to the West Indies in pursuit of the French, it would be easy for the French by quick going steamers to send

¹ Printed in Lord Dalling's *Life of Palmerston*, iii. 390-402.

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intelligence of our movement to their fleet, which might then double back to the Channel and for ten days or a fortnight cover the transport of any number of men from France to this country. After we had been at war a year, and had got all our ships manned and at sea, this might be prevented by our having liners enough for both purposes; but in the outset I do not see what could prevent it, and you ought to place the country in a condition to withstand such a trial.

Memorandum by Sir Charles Wood

March 21, 1847.

I have read the Duke of Wellington's Memorandum, in which I need hardly say that I concur; and I will only add on the subject of the military defences what is in progress for this year, as the Cabinet generally are probably not aware of what is already ordered.

I. The sea defences of Plymouth, Portsmouth, and I believe Sheerness, will be completed by the end of the year, and the ground will be purchased for erecting further land defences. The latter works cannot, of course, be commenced until the land is bought. Works are in progress at Pembroke.

II. Harbours of refuge in England. These are in fact, under that pacific name, to be used not only for that purpose, but as deep water harbours for steamers, etc., to lie in war for the purpose of guarding the Channel.

1. Harwich was begun by the late Government, and will be nearly completed this year. 2. Dover. Mr. Walker's plan for a long pier sanctioned, and money to be voted for what can be executed within the year. This pier will be very useful and complete in itself for certain purposes, or will form an essential part of a larger enclosure from the sea. 3. Portland. A bill brought in for the purchase of the land, and as much money to be voted as can be expended within the year.

III. Channel Islands. 1. Jersey, land partly bought, money to be voted for the remainder, and for a com-

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mencement of the works. 2. Guernsey. This is not so urgent. Money to be voted for purchase of land. 3. Alderney commands Cherbourg and the entrance to the Channel. Money to be voted for purchase of land, and as much as can probably be executed within the year. Orders are already given for purchasing the land, and preparations on the spot are going on for the works. 1200 men have been added to the artillery, 1500 to the marines.

Thus much will be done, and it is not insignificant in amount, by the end of the year towards our national defence. These works might be pushed on faster, but the revenue is not in a state with the heavy demand upon it to afford more. Those demands will not be much diminished according to present appearances, and we must not shut our eyes to the probability of increased taxation this year. The question for present decision is the introduction of a militia bill, and I see no reason to change my opinion that it will be better to postpone this matter till after the general election. I entertain a strong opinion that this will be very unpopular amongst the class of persons from whom we generally derive *our* support at elections. The question of education, however unreasonable the conduct of those who oppose it may be, has already raised difficulties enough, and it certainly will be very impolitic to raise up more for ourselves. In most of the large towns the very best friends we have had are the persons now leading the anti-government education movement; amongst them are also to be found the Quakers and peace-societies, and it seems to me that we shall be opposed by the greater number of our own old friends, and be driven to rely for support on our habitual opponents. All this it might be necessary to encounter if the necessity for the measure was imminent and pressing. I cannot, however, see that it is a bit more so than it has been any time for the last three or four years, or that it may not just as well be postponed for a year more. Indeed I do not see that any time will

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be lost. No sum for paying for the training of the men is included in the estimates, and the *certain* expenditure runs so close to the *probable* revenue that we cannot vote more than the amount stated in the budget. This being so, a militia bill introduced early next September will answer every purpose of the present, the time for training being usually in the summer; and by this postponement we avoid the additional difficulty at the elections.

Memorandum by Sir George Grey

March 22, 1847.

Although fully sensible of the importance of our being prepared with efficient means of defence in the event of any sudden declaration of war, I do not think it either necessary or expedient to propose a Militia Bill during the present session. Even if the subject had been sufficiently considered to enable us at once to lay before Parliament a Bill for this purpose, much time would certainly be occupied in the discussions arising out of it, and a formidable opposition would probably be raised to it, which in the last session of a Parliament would be most inconvenient. But I apprehend that, even if a Bill were to be introduced, the principle on which it should be founded would require much more consideration than has yet been given to it. I have no reason to believe that the Draft of the Bill which accompanies these papers and which was left in the War Office by the last Government had actually been agreed to by Sir R. Peel's Cabinet, and I think it most desirable that what we may ultimately propose on this subject should be very carefully considered, more so than I believe to be possible in the midst of the daily pressure of other business during the session of Parliament. It has always appeared to me that, in estimating our means of defence, we are apt to underrate the advantages we should possess on any sudden emergency in the available amount of our mercantile steamers. We have a large number of vessels,

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the property of private Companies, of various sizes, which in the event of war would be comparatively useless for the purposes in which they are at present employed, and which might be hired by the Government at the shortest notice. For distant foreign service they might be unfit, but what we should most want would be to have a complete command of the Channel, and for this purpose these vessels would be admirably suited. Many are commanded by men who are well acquainted with the Channel navigation, and with some heavy guns and a few officers and men they would make it difficult for any French force of large amount to cross the Channel with safety. We should, of course, know what was going on in the way of preparation at Cherbourg or any other French port, for which purpose the small steamers of great speed, now employed as Packets between this country and France, would be of great service. I presume we have accurate information as to the steamers which might be available in the event of a war, and the immediate object which I think we ought to keep in view is the ready means of manning them efficiently and without delay. I should then have little fear of a successful attempt at invasion.

Memorandum by Lord Grey

March 26, 1847.

I feel very strongly the necessity of putting the country in a better state of defence, but I am not the less decidedly of opinion that the introduction of a militia bill this year would be inexpedient. This conclusion is founded not only on the reasons already stated in the papers of Sir G. Grey and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but also on my opinion formed after much consideration of the subject when I was Secretary at War that, in order to render the militia really effective, the changes which have taken place in the state of society render it indispensable that the alterations in the constitution of the force would be very much greater than was proposed in the draft bill.

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I am persuaded that at much less cost a far more valuable addition to our means of defence might be made by adopting a plan of a different kind. But to consider as it ought to be considered such a measure in the midst of the pressure of business during the session of Parliament is utterly impossible.

Memorandum by Lord Auckland

April 2, 1847.

I am afraid that the financial and parliamentary difficulties, which are stated in some of these notes, must be regarded as conclusive against the bringing forward in the present session of a Bill for raising a Militia force, and that we must rest for another year upon the hope that the danger which all foresee to be gathered against us may yet for a time continue suspended. I feel nevertheless that no disposition nor possible augmentation of our Naval force could altogether secure our coasts from aggressions of a desultory, or even worse those of a serious character, and that this country cannot be regarded as safe until it shall be in such a condition as may enable the Government to collect at a very short notice large bodies of men well trained to arms. In all, except in men, our preparations for defence are advancing, and they are far better now than they were two years ago. The sea-defences of the Medway, of Portsmouth, and of Plymouth are already excellent, though much remains to be done upon some of them; but the land defences are still very incomplete, and all that is required for Pembroke is backward, though the plan of protection for its dockyard is arranged, and some progress towards its execution will I trust be made in the course of the present year. It will take many years to complete what is intended for the Channel Islands, and for the harbours of refuge; but the land defences of these islands, though incomplete, are, particularly in Jersey, in good condition, and their small militia in good order.

With regard to Naval preparation our arrangements

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for this year have been greatly disturbed by the detention of ships in the River Plate, by the demand of force for the Tagus, and by the requisitions of Ireland ; but I hope, nevertheless, to have in the course of the summer strong squadrons for demonstration and exercise both in the Mediterranean and in the Channel. The organisation of the mercantile steam ships, as suggested by Sir George Grey, is already carried very far forwards. They have, to the number of nearly 900, been surveyed and recorded, and though but a small proportion of these can be adapted to very effective service, a considerable number could be made useful, and we have guns and carriages in store for the armament of many. I am assured that in little more than a week fifty of these steamers might be made ready and many more with a longer period. It is to be hoped that their crews and engineers might be induced in case of war to remain in them, and men from the Marine Artillery would direct the guns. Additional Marines have been voted to the Navy in this year and in another year I might hope for more seamen, and I would particularly suggest that in a Militia Bill a portion of the men raised for the maritime counties should be enrolled for the defence of the coast and for naval service in the Channel. I must, however, looking to the new powers of aggression which are given by steam, repeat what I have said at the beginning of this note and what has been said upon much higher authority, that this country cannot be regarded as safe without a much larger body of land forces than is at present organised for its defence.

Memorandum by Lord Palmerston

April 10, 1847.

The only safe footing upon which a country like England, with so much of wealth and possessions to lose, can stand with regard to a powerful and close neighbour like France, with so much to covet and so much to revenge, is a footing at least of equality, if it cannot be

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of superiority ; and if we cannot attain equality in means of offence, let us at least establish an equation between our means of defence and the means of attack possessed by France. This at present is far, very far from being the case. There is not at present any deliberate wish for war with England on the part of the French Government ; but England and France come into contact, and often into something like conflict, politically and commercially in almost every part of the globe. The insolence or indiscretion of a subordinate officer, the rival jealousy of grasping merchants, a hundred possible incidents may at any moment give rise to questions which, inflaming national feelings on one side of the Channel or the other, may place the most peace loving Government, to say the least of it, in great embarrassment, and which might furnish fair ground of quarrel to a Government in France anxious of finding occasion for a rupture. The King of the French is advancing in years ; his reign must probably end ere long, and might at any time be succeeded by a minority or by the reign of a youthful monarch. In such a new condition of things, with young Princes burning for distinction in the army and navy, with popular leaders aiming at power and glory by exciting the warlike passions of the nation, peace would be still less secure than at present ; and the temptation which France might feel to bruise or to humble a rich and defenceless neighbour and ancient rival might become suddenly irresistible.

It requires therefore very little political foresight to perceive that it is absolutely necessary that no time should be lost in taking without ostentation, but steadily, systematically, and without one day's avoidable delay, such measures as may be requisite for placing this country in a condition to resist a sudden blow to be struck by surprise upon any outbreak upon the part of France. To have ready permanently in peace the means of carrying on the active and aggressive operations of war is what

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no man would advise : the reasons against it are too obvious to require to be stated. But we ought to have permanently organised in time of peace means which might be brought into action in a fortnight, and which would afford us the power of repelling attack during the first twelve months of a war. For it would require little short of twelve months to organise and complete a war establishment even on a moderate scale. But what is the danger to be provided against ? Is it cruising against our commerce ? We might have small vessels enough to prevent much serious loss of this kind. Is it the capture of Colonies and foreign military posts ? This we must take our chance about. As to our Colonies, some might be taken by surprise at first, but, if we ultimately remained masters of the sea, we should take them back again, and the French Colonies with them ; and provided we can defend the United Kingdom we need not be uneasy about the command of the sea. As to our Military Posts, like Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, the Cape, Mauritius, their state of defence ought to be minutely inquired into, as to fortification, armaments, and garrison, and they should be enabled to hold out against attack until relief could be sent from home. Malta especially requires attention, because it is exposed to sudden attack by 15 to 20,000 men, who might be carried thither from Algiers by the large Steam Fleet employed by France in her Post Office and commercial communications between Marseilles and various ports in the Mediterranean. Is the danger the loss of the Channel Islands ? They would probably be attacked ; they might be defended, or they might be taken, and if taken recaptured.

Their loss would be a blow, but not a fatal one. The real danger is at home, quite at home, at the heart of the Empire, in our dockyards, and in London, by the landing of a French army on our southern coast. To be able absolutely to prevent this even by a war establishment of our Navy would be difficult ; to prevent it by such

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a Navy as we can maintain or have provided on a Peace establishment is impossible. I mean it is quite impossible with such means to be sure of preventing it, and it is nearly sure that it would be impossible to do so. One single night would suffice to bring over from 20 to 30,000 men from French ports in steamers, and by midday they would be landed on our coast. Harbours of refuge, or more properly speaking, naval stations for steamers and ships of war, could not prevent this; because the landing would have been effected before the steamers and other vessels scattered about in these harbours could get signal of the invasion, know what point it was aimed at, and be assembled at any rendezvous to act in a body. We should be wilfully blind to the true and real nature of our position if we did not see that it would be perfectly possible that, in spite of all our present naval means, we might within a fortnight after a rupture have forty thousand French landed on the southern coast of England, coming in separate bodies from Cherburgh, St. Malo, Boulogne, Dunkirk. What could we bring to resist such a force and to protect either our Dockyards, our great military store house Woolwich, or our capital London? At the very outside about 14,000 men capable of being brought together as an army in the field. Our Dockyards, it is true, will some of them soon be safe from a sea attack; Sheerness and Plymouth are nearly so. Portsmouth will be so by the end, not of this year, but of next; Pembroke at some indefinite period, for no works have as yet been begun there. But all these might be assailed with success by land, and the works to defend them from land attack are to be constructed upon ground only just bought. Woolwich, containing Military and Naval stores for the supply both of the Army and Navy, is an open place, without any defensive works whatever, and from its position commanded by neighbouring heights and therefore incapable of being fortified. The establishments now at Woolwich ought to be removed to some place in the

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centre of England, where they could be protected by works strong enough to resist a surprise.

Is a Government doing its duty by this country which leaves the possibility that the elements of our naval strength and the safety of the capital should have to depend upon the issue of a battle between 14,000 British and 30 or 40,000 French, or which even by neglect of ordinary precautions tempts a powerful neighbour to inflict upon this country evils and losses of all kinds which even an unsuccessful invasion would entail upon us? But suppose the French fleet of line of battle ships to start with troops on board to make a sweep of the West Indies; suppose our fleet hastily got together to follow it in order to protect our Colonies; suppose the French fleet to have made only a feint in that direction and to double back by another track to the Channel, and suppose them to have by this means for a week the command of the Narrow Seas, and all this is far from impossible; what in that case is there to prevent the French from landing by their steamers a hundred thousand men on our coast? They have the men, the equipments, the guns and the horses, and the steamers to convey them; all they would want would be security from interruption. In the present state of the United Kingdom and with our existing means of defence, the landing of 30 or 40,000 French would be a blow from the loss of all kinds produced by which it would take us many years to recover. The landing of a hundred thousand would be the conquest of the country, or at least the submission of England to conditions of peace which would reduce her thenceforward to the condition of a Secondary Power, stripped of all her foreign possessions and weighed down and impoverished by pecuniary impositions.

There is only one means of providing against such dangers, and that is to have a sufficient number of men armed, organised and trained to defend the country against foreign invasion. The best would be a regular

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force ; but to add to our army a regular force large enough for the purpose, and to be kept always at home for defence against a danger not immediately apparent and threatening, would be morally and financially impossible. The only resource then is that which almost every other nation adopts, namely a Militia, which, being trained only a short portion of the year, will cost much less and be less obtrusive than regular troops, but which after a couple of years' training might be fit for service if mixed up with regular troops. I am therefore deeply convinced, not that a Militia force is expedient, but that it is absolutely necessary. As far as I can judge from a hasty glance at the arrangements contemplated by the Bill prepared by the late Government, they seem good ; at all events they have the advantage of being likely to be supported by the persons who formed them. The number of men of which the establishment is to consist is right and proper and bears about the same proportion to the population now which the number fixed by the Bill of 1802 did to the population then. It will take three years from the time when any such Bill is brought in before it can give us any force of adequate amount, in a state of adequate efficiency, and considering the great uncertainty of future events I am against postponing this Bill to another year. I can apprehend no great difficulty in carrying it through Parliament upon an understanding with the members of the late Government who, I believe, are very anxious for the measure. I cannot fear its unpopularity in the country, especially if it is supported by leading men on both sides. The Militia system is no novelty, and this Bill would only be an adaptation of the existing law, which is but suspended from year to year, to altered circumstances. No doubt it would be most agreeable to a nation if its defence could be provided for by an army of angels without any effort of its own, just as it would like its services to be provided for by some Aladdin's lamp without any demand upon its own pecuniary resources. But I think the people

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of England are shrewd enough to see that England is worth defending, and I trust they have good sense enough to be aware that a country can be defended only by arming and training a portion of its inhabitants; and if they are made to understand that the choice lies between 30 or 40,000 more regular troops or 120 or 130,000 Militia for the United Kingdom, they would prefer the latter arrangement. The knowledge that such a defensive force was at the command of the British Government would act as a great check upon any warlike propensities in France, even if the whole of it should not be at all times efficient. I have argued solely upon grounds connected with France; but we must not forget that there is such a Power as Russia, and that political circumstances might bring the Russian fleet into co-operation with that of France.

From the Duke of Wellington

July 2, 1847.

I had the honour of receiving this morning your Lordship's letter marked *Private* of the 1st inst. on the subject of the future government of the island of Malta. Our position in the Mediterranean is now military and territorial as well as political, and its maintenance is essential not only to the honour of the country, but to its vital interests in the Levant and in the East of Asia; to the existence of some nations on the shores of the Mediterranean; to the independence of others; and to the political power of others; all in alliance with this country. The protection of all these interests is important to our extensive commercial relations with the world, and the maintenance of the political influence and power of the country as one of the great States of Europe is connected with its eventual safety.

From Lord Palmerston

August 16, 1847.

You are quite right about doing as quietly as possible whatever may be practicable as to improving our means

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of defence ; but the arrangements with the Companies as to fitting their steamers for carrying guns might be made without noise or bustle, and the alterations might be made from time to time whenever each steamer might be obliged to lie by for a time for the repair of boilers or engines. The French will be sure anyhow to know exactly what we are about, for they keep a sharp look out, and within the last two months they have had some of their war steamers lying for a week or ten days at a time in different parts of the Thames under pretence of taking in coals, but no doubt to see what we are doing at Tilbury and elsewhere in the way of defensive works, and probably also to take soundings.

From the Duke of Wellington

Walmer Castle : September 6, 1847.

I have long given my attention to the Channel Islands, and particularly a good deal lately. I am very happy to find that the Govt. is at work there in the right direction though very slowly. I assure your Lordship and I think that I could show you that, if what the Govt. is now thinking of doing in the Channel Islands was completed, not only would the defence of these islands be secured, but so important a strategick advantage would be acquired for the British Navy that in fact Cherbourg would become nearly useless ; the advantage equally in view concerning that port and never lost sight of up to this moment in the continuance and improvement of its works, viz. the position of the French fleets in the Channel for the purpose of an invasion of these islands, would be disappointed and rendered so difficult and slow as to be nearly nugatory ! But we must get forward with these works, and above all we must immediately take care of Alderney ! Indeed I am so jealous and anxious upon this subject and so suspicious of our ambitious and enterprising neighbour that I propose to communicate with the Secretary of State as

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soon as he will return with a view to send a force there to make it certain that a *coup de main* shall not be struck there.

From Lord Palmerston

December 21, 1847.

I asked Fox Maule the other evening in the House of Commons what is the outline of the plan which he is about to submit to the Cabinet, and from what he told me I fear it will fall short of the necessity of the case. He said his scheme consisted of three parts, 1st a Regular Militia to be formed and organised when war should break out ; 2nd a Local Militia for time of peace ; 3rd an encouragement to the formation of Volunteer Corps as an immediate measure. Now the only difference between a local and a regular Militia is that the local Militia cannot be marched out of its counties, while the regular Militia is liable, when embodied in time of war, to serve in any part of the United Kingdom. The cost of the one is exactly the same as that of the other, but their efficiency is entirely different. The question to be asked is, what is the danger against which we wish to guard ? That danger is that within a week after a rupture with France we may find 30 to 40,000 French Regular troops landed upon our coast. The provision against that danger is some force which should be ready and capable of meeting such an army in the field. For any such purpose your local Militia and Volunteers would be wholly useless. I say a local Militia, by which I mean a force confined to its own county ; for if the force is liable when embodied to meet invasion, to be marched out of its county to any part of the Kingdom, it is the regular Militia. As to Volunteers, they might be good for the local defence of particular towns such as London, Liverpool, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Portsmouth and Plymouth, and might be usefully raised in such places to co-operate with the garrisons ; but Volunteer Corps which would be composed of tradesmen, shopkeepers, attornies and gentlemen, and their respective

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dependents, could not be expected to quit their homes and take the field.

What we want is a force which, being organised, armed, equipped, and trained in time of peace, but not embodied, should be ready on the approach of war to start into existence at the shortest notice, in a shape and character as nearly as possible resembling a regular army ; which from its organisation and training should be capable of being mixed with the regular army without creating confusion, and which from the hardy habits and strong constitutions of the private soldiers should be fit to encounter the fatigues and exposure incident to service with the regulars, on march, in camp, in bivouack, in the field. All this can be attained by a regular Militia liable when embodied to serve in any part of the United Kingdom. But you must be prepared to expect that any partially dormant force of this kind will, when called out to be embodied, muster very short of its nominal establishment, and therefore the nominal establishment must be made large enough to allow for such defalcations. I am sorry to see the prejudices of one or two of our colleagues against this measure ; but the duty of providing for the safety of the country is too paramount to be neglected in deference to the peculiar notions which any individual may have adopted, and I have not as yet heard any plausible substitute for a Militia. I hope that we have not stripped our Colonies and foreign stations of their proper garrisons in order to swell the amount of our force at home, for that would be robbing Peter to pay Paul. Malta evidently requires a reinforcement.

From Fox Maule

January 3, 1848.

I send you a Memorandum of the Duke of Wellington's upon the papers which by your desire I transmitted to him. You will perceive that he gives no decided opinion upon the details of the proposed measures, but takes the opportunity of again reiterating his views over

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the condition of our national defences and the steps which he would recommend for their further provision. I shall not enter upon any detailed observations on his Memorandum, but I cannot forbear from giving my opinion that the Duke points at a much larger increase to our standing army than my views of what is strictly constitutional would warrant or that the House of Commons would sanction, even were the Minister to propose it. Moreover I very much doubt whether such an increase, from no very apparent cause, would not—and not unreasonably—excite the jealousy of foreign Powers and bring on those very events which it is the general desire of all to avert.

Memorandum from Sir Charles Wood

January 5, 1848.

I have carefully read the heads of two bills for organising a militia force, and the explanatory memorandum which accompanies them. I am not satisfied with the proposals. There seems to me to be a great objection to the scheme of raising separately the regular and the local militia force, as well as to many of the details. The great object is to provide some ready means of suddenly increasing our available military force on the outbreak of hostilities. It would be necessary of course to strengthen our foreign garrisons, which could only be done by sending troops from home, thus weakening our defensive means at home ; and we must therefore have the power of supplying the place of the men thus sent away, as well as of adequately strengthening our means of resisting an attack if made on our own shores. The same necessity exists in the naval service of providing the additional force required for the beginning of war ; and the great difficulty in both cases is to provide the means of doing this, of being properly prepared in military and naval defence in the beginning of hostilities without keeping up a war establishment during peace.

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I am not one of those who are so very apprehensive of an actual descent on our shores. People have got into the habit of talking of the landing of the French on the Sussex coast as a circumstance to be expected, almost as a matter of course. I certainly think that the facility of such an operation is very much over-rated.

It is quite true that the French have a large disposable land force, and that they could concentrate 40,000 or 50,000 men anywhere on their northern coast without our knowledge. But they could not collect a large force of steam vessels anywhere without our knowing it, and thus giving us ample warning. The passage may more certainly be made by means of steam ; but, on the other hand, steam gives many advantages to us also. We can more easily than heretofore watch the enemy's port, more rapidly and certainly communicate with the protecting squadron, more easily maintain a blockading force off the port, more easily collect an opposing fleet. The same wind which drove away the blockading vessels brought the blockaded ships out of port. This is not so now, and the one side can remain, if the other can come out. This to a considerable extent counterbalances the greater ease of the passage. I am inclined to think too that a force collected in most of their harbours would be exposed to the fire of the long-range artillery of modern days, and ought to be seriously damaged by shell and hollow shot. Even if protected by batteries, small steam vessels with one long gun would offer but a small mark, and might approach within range under the protection of our squadrons. Every harbour but Cherbourg is only a half tide harbour, and though the latter is formidably defended, I should doubt its being unassailable in this way. It is, too, a long passage to make unperceived. The basin at St. Malo is unapproachable, but there again the passage is very long, past the Channel Islands, and not very good except in calm weather. We ought to have a very decided superiority in the Channel. By taking up the large merchant steamers and putting

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one or two guns into them, we might have three or four steamers for every one which the French could bring. Their large steamers would carry a great number of men, but are very liable to be disabled ; and small steamers with one gun might play over again the part of Sir Francis Drake's pinnaces and the Spanish galleons. In this view I believe the most important step which we can take is to appropriate guns and proper carriages for all the steamers which are fit for this purpose, so that within a very few days they might be properly armed and equipped, and at once command the Channel. I believe this to be the best and most effectual means of defence. It is *in* the Channel and not on this side of it that the attempt at a descent must be defeated. I have said thus much not for the sake of underrating the defensive measures which I fully admit to be necessary on shore, but I am anxious to guard against exaggerated notions of danger, and to point attention more decidedly to what must be, at any rate, our *first* line of defences—steam vessels in the Channel.

I now come to the Militia. The first proposal is to raise a force of regular militia, men to be liable to serve for seven years, not to be permanently embodied, but liable to be so on the breaking out of war, and in the mean time to be drilled for a short time every year. It is not clear whether this is to be done at once, or only on the probability of war. If the latter, they are useless as a preparatory defence ; if the former, the proposal appears to me to be liable to the objection so forcibly stated in the explanatory memorandum. It seems to me to be impossible to keep hanging over a man, for so long, the liability to serve permanently away from his home for a considerable period. If a young man enlists or is to be permanently paid and employed as a soldier, this becomes his means of livelihood, and employment for the time, seven years, fourteen, or any other period. At the end of that time he may turn to some other mode of livelihood. But if he is only liable to serve he derives no means

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of subsistence from his pay as a soldier, and he is precluded from settling to any other employment or profession. He could not embark on any trade, take a house or shop, marry, or (to use a common expression) settle himself in any way. He is debarred from any permanent employment of his own providing, and none other is provided for him. For seven years he is kept in this state of suspense. This I conceive to be quite impossible. It would be easier in the naval service where a man might in the mean time serve at sea on board merchant vessels, coasters, or fishing boats, in a very similar employment ; but as regards the military service I do not think that the people of England would bear it. When war comes there must be a larger force raised to be permanently embodied. Troops of the line are not dearer than militia in permanent pay, and it may be a question which force you will have ; but in either case I believe that men who are at any time to be maintained for any considerable time in permanent pay and embodied must be raised for that avowed purpose, and with the knowledge on their part that they are to be so employed. It seems to me, however, that it might be possible without the necessity of what I consider a very great hardship to provide for a force to be permanently embodied for a much shorter period, but long enough to enable the country to provide a force of the former description ; and I would do this by modifying the proposal for the local militia.

From Lord Palmerston

January 11, 1848.

I have read with great pleasure your very clear and able paper which I herewith return to you.¹ Your explanation of the dangers to which we should be liable on the breaking out of a war is full and complete, as well as your explanation of the temptation which the defenceless condition of one party holds out to aggression from

¹ Lord John's memorandum, circulated to the Cabinet on January 10, is printed by Walpole, ii. 20-24.

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the other ; and this temptation may operate any day of any week. We and the French have ships of war intermingled on every sea. We are liable at any moment to have a question arise between the two Governments growing out of an affront real or imaginary given or received ; the French may demand reparation where none is due, or may refuse it when our honour requires that it should be exacted. In the present relative condition of the two countries we should be obliged to go to an extreme point of humiliation, or to put the whole country into confusion either by hurried measures for defence or by the disturbance of an actual invasion. Your proposed plan is ingeniously contrived, but I will state to you freely the observations that occur to me upon it. But first let me answer Fox Maule's objections to the regular Militia. They are two. First that it would be a great hardship to take balloted men away from their homes and business to embody them for five years or more during war. Now this is no doubt an inconvenience, but it is impossible to provide for an armed defence of the country without inconvenience ; and if the principle of substitution is allowed, which it clearly ought to be, and still more if Sidney Herbert's mode of raising the men were adopted, almost all the men would have enrolled themselves voluntarily, and they could not complain of a service which they had of their own accord made themselves liable to. But I never heard that this inconvenience was deemed any serious objection to the regular or to the local Militia, to *both* of which as by law constituted it applied. Moreover this objection applies to Fox Maule's own plan because he contemplates the permanent embodiment of his 50,000 Militia in time of war ; and even, if I mistake not, he would embody for a certain time in certain contingencies his army of reserve. This objection too is not wholly got over by your plan, because I take it that a man who is taken away from his service or employment for two years to be an embodied soldier, nay even for one year, is not much

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more likely to find his place vacant for him to return to it than if he had been away five or even seven years.

Maule's second objection to a Militia is that if you ballot the men in peace the chances are that, though single when balloted, they may become married and have had children before the war comes and they are required to be embodied. I must say I think this a very weak, I might almost punningly say a *childish* objection. If war should come soon the change would of course be small, because their children would not be numerous ; if war should be postponed or never come, being kept off by our state of preparation, in the one case the charge would be of limited duration because their term of service would be near expiring and young unmarried men would be enrolled in their stead, and in the second case the charge would not come into operation at all. In any case this contingent liability would form no part of the burthen of preparation in peace, and it would unfortunately be an inconsiderable item in the cost of a war. I cannot think that the possibility that in a given case the country would have to support for a short time the wives and families of a certain number of Militia men can be deemed a reason for exposing the wives and families of England to be dealt with as may seem meet to the heroes of Algeria.

Now with regard to your plan it consists in this : you would fix the Militia quota of the United Kingdom at 200,000, to be balloted and enrolled at the rate of one-fifth in each year, so that it would be five years hence before the whole number was enrolled, and six or seven years before the whole number had received training enough to be useful for purposes of defence. Now five, six, or seven years are in this matter an awfully distant period, and I should prefer a much earlier completion of training for a larger portion, with a power to diminish the annual training afterwards if thought fit. I think Sidney Herbert's plan was in this respect good ; and even yours, if I understand it, would leave these details

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to the discretion of the Government, and, while fixing the maximum of the quotas and of the periods of service, would leave the apportionments to the Executive Government. If the numbers were enrolled and trained by fifths you might in the first year call out the whole quotas of counties or at least whole battalions to the extent of one-fifth, or you might call out in each county one-fifth of the quota ; and upon this I would suggest that unless you assemble the Militia in battalions large enough to be drilled in battalion manœuvres you will not accomplish your purpose. What you want is a number of battalions fit to fall into the line at the outbreak of a war, and if the men have not been well drilled in battalion movements by companies of good strength each they would only create confusion when put into line with regular troops. The capacity of *moving* is quite as essential for troops as the knowledge of the use of the musket ; and to move with any steadiness under fire or in face of an enemy, the men must have been well practised in such movements on the drilling ground. If you took your numbers in three years and by thirds instead of by fifths, perhaps your measure might be sufficient. I should think seven years a better term for enrolment than five ; it would render less frequent all the troublesome and expensive operations connected with the raising of the men, and I should much doubt whether the difference of period would be any material consideration to the men. Your force once organised would of course be more efficient, and if you mention to the men, as of course you must do, their liability to be embodied during war, perhaps they would care less for the seven years, and one additional year if war should happen during the seventh year of their service, than for the liability to be embodied for two years during war. When once the men were embodied and had acquired the habits of soldiers, there would not be many who would object to a third or fourth year of service after the second. But after all our first object must be to render the force efficient for the

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purposes for which we want to have any such force at all.

One thing I should strongly recommend, and that is that we should adhere to the present law by which the Militia when embodied is liable to serve in any part of the United Kingdom. The interchange of English and Irish Militia would be a most important advantage if they were to be embodied. With regard to our Mediterranean garrisons, it would be worth while to ask the Duke whether he thinks they are strong enough, and if not what force they ought to consist of. I shall be much surprised if he thinks them at present sufficient for the defence either of Gibraltar, Malta, or Corfu, but especially of Malta, and as to sending out reinforcements to those places on the breaking out of a war, how would they be sent? If in ships of war you would be deprived of the service of such ships in the Channel where they would much be wanted; and such ships crowded with troops and unfit to fight might be intercepted and taken. If you sent out the troops in ordinary transports or in troop ships without guns, you must send other ships to convoy them, and still they might be taken on the passage.

From Lord Palmerston

January 18, 1848.

I return you Charles Wood's note. Of course our finance cannot be flourishing this year, but it will improve next year, and may not be so bad even at Easter as it is now. But almost any expedient to face the temporary difficulty would be better than to proclaim to Europe that we are too poor and too much distressed to be able to defend the country.

From Lord Auckland

January 24, 1848.

I have been studying the French Naval Estimates for 1848-9. They announce a reduction of 2000 in the number of men afloat, and this will produce a saving

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of £81,000. On the other hand there will be an increase of expenditure on stores, ship building, dockyards and fortifications, to the amount of £112,000, so that upon the whole of the Naval Estimates there will be an increase of £31,000. The reduction of men is only to be regarded as temporary, and the fleet in the Mediterranean is to be kept at its present amount. It is difficult to say whether the total amount of the expense of France for naval purposes is above or below that which is incurred in this country. The aggregate of each of the sums voted is nearly equal. We have a heavy half-pay list weighing on our Naval Estimates, and they have large Colonial expenses weighing upon theirs, and it seems that their progress in the accumulation of means is not below ours. Three ships of the line were launched in the French ports in 1847, and four are promised for 1848, and seventeen steamers of war, and seventeen dispatch steamers are said to be far advanced. The French Government is spending largely on fortifications. A fort, said to be impregnable, has lately been completed at Martinique, works are in progress at the Isle of Bourbon and in other Colonies and on many parts of the coast of France. Assuredly, the means that we employ are not more than are necessary.

From the Duke of Wellington

December 8, 1848.

I should deceive your Lordship if I was to conceal from you my opinion that the existing military establishments are founded upon what is absolutely required for peace. I consider it desirable to postpone the consideration of the subject till the form of the Government of the Republic will be settled and a judgment can be formed of the trend of its policy, because the public opinion may be influenced by the consideration of the then existing circumstances. But it is my duty to submit to your Lordship that this country has not in its service a man not necessary for its service in peace.

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To Sir Francis Baring

January 26, 1849.

The French are somewhat unaccountable in their naval preparations. That they should continue fortifying their dockyards and harbours against a *coup de main* by us is but natural; but their present expenses seem to go further. I have no conception what they can mean, but of course their state of preparation makes it very difficult for us to reduce.

To Sir Francis Baring

January 4, 1850.

There is this great danger before us: we are apt not to be so well prepared as the French during the first six months of a war. This might be no great evil while we lived in an impregnable citadel, but now that we inhabit an open town it is not so pleasant and comfortable.

I conclude, as I have always heard from Lord Minto, Auckland and yourself, that we have ships enough—to find the men at once is the difficulty.

I agree with you that it is not prudent to take any measures respecting a registry till we have the census. But we must be cautious how we say so in Parliament.

It is absurd to suppose that a war with France can arise like the Frimley murder or in a sudden night attack, without previous warning.

But I fear on the other hand that we cannot wait, as we have previously done, till the French have collected their steamers and means of transport in an opposite port. In any danger of war we must impress seamen, arm our ships and then inform the French Government that unless our ultimatum is agreed to in a week we shall blockade their ports, and intercept their ships assembling at threatening points in the Channel.

It is a serious evil, but with our state of imperfect defence cannot be avoided.

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As to the defence of our ports the works against the sea are completed. We now want to prevent an enemy taking possession of commanding heights in the neighbourhood, and this is exclusively a military question. However, I have no objection to have a sea officer employed to aid our Engineers.

From Lord Palmerston

February 3, 1850.

This Report about the fortifications made at Alexandria by Mehemet Ali and Ibrahim under French direction, in order to make Egypt tenable by a French army in case of a war, is worthy of your attention ; not merely as an evidence of the designs of France in that quarter, but as an example not to be overlooked with reference to our own home. Almost every sea bordering country but England has of late years been quietly but actively erecting defences for its most vulnerable points. Russia has strongly fortified her Baltic and Black Sea arsenals ; France is incessantly working at all her naval stations, and Toulon, Brest, Cherbourg, and St. Malo are every year becoming stronger. Egypt, a mere province, has been doing what is here described, though most likely Louis Philippe contributed to the expense ; but England, who more than any other Power depends for her existence upon her naval resources, has not yet secured any one of her Dockyards from destruction by sudden attack.

To Sir Francis Baring

May 17, 1850.

I am for remaining quiet and running a risk. But at the same time let every calculation be made as to what we could do on an emergency. I believe the French majority wish to divert attention by foreign quarrels, but we shall not give them any fair pretext.

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From Lord Palmerston

September 14, 1850.

This Cherburg Review and the insight which it has afforded into the means which France has of attacking us ought I think to impress upon you the urgency of not delaying those further measures which are necessary to secure our Dockyards from destruction by surprise. Cherburg is not above a hundred miles from Portsmouth or a hundred and fifty from Plymouth, and any amount of force naval and military which a French Government might chuse to send out could start from thence at nightfall without the possibility of our having any previous notice, and would by sunrise be ready to land troops on our coast. Our projected watch posts on the Channel Islands would be of no avail against Cherburg, which is nearer to us than any of the Channel Islands are. Portland indeed when completed will be a counter-acting station, but will not supersede the necessity for local defences for our most vulnerable points, our Dockyards. It would be worth your while as a matter of curiosity to compare the number and weight of guns that would be brought at Cherburg to bear upon an attacking naval force, with the number and weight of guns which could be brought to bear upon a naval force trying to enter any one of our naval arsenals. The disproportion is not small. Make your hay while the sun shines, and prepare your defences while you are at peace.

From Lord Palmerston

October 24, 1851.

I hope the idea which you threw out in your note the other day as to the importance of our having a reserve force in the shape of a Militia or something of the kind will fructify in your reflections. There is no country in the world to compare with this as offering temptations for plunder, and as destitute of means of defence. We rely almost intirely on our naval force to prevent

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invasion, and if the sea belt was once broken through by a large land army it would take us some weeks probably to bring even twenty thousand men to act together as an army at any one point. We are the bravest, and with the single exception of the Chinese perhaps the most unwarlike nation on the earth, and out of our population of 26 millions we would find few men beyond those actually serving in the small Military Force, and the old Pensioners, who know the use of weapons or the difference between a musket and a broomstick. The chances are in favour of the President, but if the Reds were to triumph or Joinville to succeed, we should have to sleep with one eye open.

From Lord Palmerston

December 3, 1851.

Here is a very rough estimate of the probable expence of organising a Reserve Force of eighty thousand men, which might of course be increased to 100,000. I do not think that the mere enrolment of men would be of much use unless they were brought together for some kind of training, and a week in each year for three or four years would be the least that could be useful. You might employ the Pensioners to drill these men. You might train half one year and the other half the other to diminish expence, though of course with diminished efficiency. This measure if adopted ought not, however, to put a stop to or slacken the defensive works for our Dockyards and Channel Islands, which works are of the two measures perhaps the most pressing in point of importance, and when once done are permanent without much further annual expence.

CHAPTER X

INDIA

WHEN the Russell Ministry took office, the first Sikh war had been recently concluded. The invaders had been repulsed by the joint efforts of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, and the Viceroy, Sir Henry Hardinge, both veterans of the Peninsula campaign. Both were rewarded for their services by a peerage, and on leaving India at the opening of 1848, the Governor-General declared that his successor would not have to fire a shot within five years. Only one-third of the territory of the Sikhs was annexed, the rest surviving as a Protectorate, which demanded a smaller occupying force. The expectation was soon to be disappointed, for their fighting spirit was unbroken ; and a fresh anxiety was to be added to the burdens which weighed on the Prime Minister and on Sir John Hobhouse, the friend of Byron, who had returned to his old post as President of the Board of Control.

The Governor-Generalship, after being offered to Lord Clarendon and Sir James Graham, was accepted by Lord Dalhousie.¹ The young Scottish Peer had been a member of Peel's Cabinet ; but his abilities were so marked that the Government felt justified in going outside the ranks of their political supporters. India needed a strong hand, and she found it in the most forceful though not the most tactful of her rulers. Shortly after his arrival the second Sikh war broke out.

¹ See Sir W. Lee-Warner, *Life of Lord Dalhousie*.

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The veteran Gough took the field once again ; but the indecisive battle of Chillianwalla in January, 1849, convinced the Cabinet that a new Commander-in-Chief was required. Though he was no favourite of the East India Company, Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, returned to India ; but before he arrived Gough retrieved his reputation by destroying the Sikh army at Gujerat on February 21. A month later the Governor-General, who had insisted on unconditional surrender, acted on his own responsibility and annexed the Punjab. The decision was approved by the Home Government, and the new province settled down under the inspiring guidance of John and Henry Lawrence.

To Lord Hardinge

July 8, 1846.

I take advantage of the opportunity afforded me by my coming into office to offer you my hearty congratulations on your brilliant, victorious, and unchequered success. I am sure that no other Chief can so well consolidate the peace you have achieved as yourself. The Eastern Nations obey a vigorous rule, but would easily evade all obligations if they did not fear the consequences. I trust therefore we shall have the advantage of your continuance in the Govt. of India.

From Lord Hardinge

Simla : September 19, 1846.

Your frank and encouraging letter of July 8 has very much gratified me. I shall endeavour to return the confidence of your Government on Indian affairs by the most unreserved expression of my sentiments, and as long as I remain here I shall act as if no change of Government had taken place. You must now let me thank you for your generous conduct in the House of Commons during the last Session. I assure you I have

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not sat opposite to you for a quarter of a century without appreciating your commendations. I value your good opinion most highly, and, proceeding from so exceptional a statesman, it will animate me to persevere in an honourable and I hope useful course. I have some fears for your health; we all know your moral energies are very great. Pray take care and do not overwork your strength.

From Sir John Hobhouse

September 23, 1846.

I saw the Chairs¹ yesterday and said what was agreed upon in Downing Street. Their recommendation was as follows. 1. *Lord Clarendon* to go to Bombay with the appointment of Governor General of India in his pocket, as immediate successor to Lord Hardinge, who is not expected to stay. 2. *Lord Dalhousie* to have the same offer if Lord Clarendon refuses. I told the Chairs that I would lay their proposals before you. Lord Clarendon would, beyond all doubt, be a splendid selection. It would give more than satisfaction—it would confer the highest credit on all parties concerned, and would add dignity and value to the position itself. But I am aware, and so was the Chairman, that it is almost too much to ask of you and of him, and that if it were even possible to make him at once Governor General he could hardly be expected to make so great a personal sacrifice. As to Lord Dalhousie, I think that, excepting Lord Clarendon, he is as good a man as can be found, and I should not be surprised if he accepted the offer if made to him.

From Sir John Hobhouse

October 6, 1846.

I have heard from Lord Clarendon and understand from him that he has communicated with his brother, and that the result is he has no objection to the offer of Bombay with the eventual Governor-Generalship being

¹ The chairmen of the various committees of the East India Company.

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made to Lord Dalhousie. I quite agree with you that the Punjaub must be reconquered, but I confess I wish there was someone else to do it. I am sorry to say that I have heard Sir Charles Napier is about to leave Sind on account of ill health. This will disarrange all our plans unless he consents to go to the Hills and not to quit India. His services will be wanted more than ever if we have to go to war with the Sikhs in the winter. I think that, as we are pretty sure to agree with the Court of Directors about the Government of Bombay, now will be the time to propose Sir Charles Napier for the eventual command in chief in India, and I shall accordingly put that matter forward.

From Sir John Hobhouse

October 10, 1846.

The Chairs give me an infinity of trouble. They object to the Secret Dispatch to Lord Hardinge on the pretext that it is an implied censure of his arrangements and shows a want of confidence in him. They have also refused, point blank, to give the eventual commission of Commander in Chief to Sir Charles Napier, and are determined to contest every contestable point with the Government and with the Commander in Chief. This conduct contrasts strongly with yours. We have no particular reason for being anxious to place a Napier in high command, quite the contrary. William Napier, with the aid of his brother's letters, had done his best to insult and degrade some of us—particularly Auckland and myself; but we looked only at the public service and wished to put the best men in the best places. On the other hand the Court have showed a pitiful spite against a family because one member of it has taken part with an antagonist of theirs and would willingly deprive India of the best soldier in all our armies, merely to wound the feelings of an obnoxious individual and indulge their own triumphant malice. It is impossible to deal on the square with such men. I feel my own complete

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inferiority in all the juggles of official controversy, and I am mortified and ashamed that such men as yourself and the Duke of Wellington have even your names introduced amongst the parties to such an ignoble strife. I will, however, take care that, whatever may become of myself, neither of you shall be compromised. I shall not continue a contest with those who have the power as well as the will to do what is wrong. But I will provide against the possibility of any mistake being made as to the real authors of this odious proscription. I doubt whether we should be justified in entrusting the command in chief to Gough or even to Hardinge during another campaign. The letter which Auckland sent to you, and the details which have come to my knowledge, make me exceedingly distrustful of the abilities of both these individuals. I mean abilities for great and difficult commands. They and their troops were saved by a miracle in the late battles on the Sutledge—that is quite clear ; but we have no right to expect a repetition of such interpositions or wonders in our favour. Will you turn over in your mind whether it would not be better for *you* to speak confidentially to the Duke of Wellington and ask him his real opinion of Hardinge's fitness to encounter another Indian emergency ? If he gives a favourable answer we may be tranquil as to the G.G., but I feel persuaded Gough ought to be induced to retire. He is full of years, honours, and emoluments. 'Tempus abire.' But how to get rid of him I do not exactly know. I do not think the Duke would be sorry to see him come home.

From Lord Palmerston

April 6, 1847.

It is certainly true that the indisposition of the Secret Committee and of the Board of Directors makes it more difficult for us to take any measures for warding off distant danger from India ; but these Directors are only temporary authorities, and India after all is a

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possession of the British Crown and not of the ever changing body of India Directors. The Queen's Government is perhaps the best judge of matters which threaten danger in India, which though very real may not be very immediate, and the nature and character of which is complicated with considerations of European politics of which the Directors can know little or nothing.

From Lord Hardinge

Calcutta : January 9, 1848.

The Mail closes this evening, and I expect Lord Dalhousie to arrive to-morrow. I cannot relinquish my charge without again expressing to you my cordial acknowledgments for the generous manner in which you have given me your support in and out of Parliament. I should have had the most perfect confidence in continuing to serve under your Government, and I should have done so at any sacrifice, if peace and security had not prevailed in the Punjab, but that country is as quiet as Hindostan, and my youthful successor, so admirably selected, will do the State better service in the administration of its civil affairs.

From Lord Dalhousie

April 18, 1848.

I have had the honour of receiving your letter of March 1st, in which you announce to me that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of your advice that the Green Ribband, vacant by the death of the Earl of Moray, should be conferred upon me. I beg your permission to express to you my deep and humble gratitude to Her Majesty for this mark of her gracious favour and approbation. No distinction could have been conferred more gratifying to me as a Scottish gentleman, and I receive it with the utmost pride and gratification. Let me thank you warmly and truly for your goodness in advising the Sovereign thus to distinguish me, while

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serving under your orders. I am deeply sensible of the kindness, the confidence, and generosity with which you have treated me from the first. I have never failed publicly or privately to express my sense of your goodness, and I shall do all in my power to prove it by unceasing exertions in the discharge of the trust you have reposed in me.

From Sir John Hobhouse

October 7, 1848.

I now send the letter from Lord Dalhousie to which I alluded in my last letter to you. Perhaps you may think it right that the Queen should see it; if so pray forward it to Her Majesty. The course proposed by Lord Dalhousie seems to me, and has long appeared, to be the only one which ought to be followed. I never entered into that part of Lord Hardinge's policy which was founded on the expectation that a strong and friendly Sikh Government could ever be re-established in the Punjaub. I always felt sure that on the first favourable occasion an attempt would be made to shake off the British yoke, and that we should be obliged to become in name what we are now in fact—the Masters of the Province. I am, at the same time, quite aware that the formal annexation of the Punjaub will give rise to a serious conflict of opinions, probably in India, but certainly at home, and that it would be advisable to have as strong a case as possible before we take so decisive a step. Lord Dalhousie has argued the matter in great detail and I think fairly enough, and his letter will furnish you with most, if not all, the facts which ought to be presented to your notice. If, in your view of the question, you should agree with him, I should be inclined to write by the next mail of the 24th of this month, and inform him that if, on a due consideration of all the facts, he is satisfied that it can be decidedly proved that the Sikh Durbar, the Chiefs and people, generally, have broken their engagements with us, and if he still continues to believe that the wisest policy would be to annex the

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country to British India, the Queen's Government fully authorises him so to do. In my opinion it would not be right to leave the whole responsibility of so important a transaction to the Governor General alone. The Home Government ought to share it with him, and as this is a matter for the consideration not of the Court of Directors generally, but rather of the Secret Committee, or, in other words, the Cabinet, as represented by the President of the India Board, of course I am most anxious to lay the whole question before you.

To Sir John Hobhouse

October 11, 1848.

I have carefully read Lord Dalhousie's able letter of the 15th August. It appears to me that he has clearly proved the mischief of two of the courses he has pointed out. But he has not proved the clear advantages of the course which he prefers, viz. annexation. The advantages of this course are to be considered in two points of view. 1. As to defence. 2. As to finance. In the first point of view it does not appear to be made out that the furnishing garrisons for so large a territory, parts of which are separated at one season of the year by almost impassable floods, and which is inhabited by a warlike disaffected treacherous people, will contribute to the strength of our position in India. Mr. Elliot's estimate of the number of troops required is referred to and set aside, but what it is or why it is erroneous, I have no means of judging. In the second point of view Lord D. acknowledges that he has no sufficient data, and can only guess from materials yet imperfectly before him. I admit that the failure of the Sikh Government to make good its engagements, the apathy of some, and the secret disaffection of the mass, leave us only the choice of annexation or abandonment. Between these two we have hardly the means of forming a judgment. I would therefore in your place inform Lord Dalhousie that we shall wait for his official reports; that we shall give the most serious

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attention to his deliberate recommendation, and that if the urgency of the case shall have induced him to take any step of importance without authority we shall be ready to put the most favourable construction on his conduct. I think you should consult Lord Hardinge and Lord Auckland before a final step is taken.

From Sir John Hobhouse

January 8, 1849.

Lord Dalhousie will not send us his views in regard to the future administration of the Punjaub until he has put down the revolt in all quarters, but I should hope that this will be accomplished in a couple of months. Lord Gough has placed himself at the head of the army of operations and has crossed the frontier with twenty thousand men and fifty pieces of cannon. The only serious regret is the enormous outlay, amounting, even now, to between three and £400,000 a month. I have heard nothing of Dalhousie's illness. He was unwell before he left Calcutta, but has borne the journey very well. His last letter was written in better spirits and better temper than his penultimate epistle, which was rather disagreeable in both respects. I need not say to you that the sudden departure of Auckland has been a most grievous affliction to me. Circumstances had for years thrown us a good deal together and given me a better opportunity than any one of his family of being acquainted with his estimable qualities.

From the Duke of Wellington

January 24, 1849.

I entertain no doubt that the wisest thing to do would be to send Sir Charles Napier. He has experience of the scene of operations, military knowledge, character, and everything calculated to secure his success. My letters will shew that the task is not very easy for any officer.

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From the Duke of Wellington

January 30, 1849.

I have seen Lord Hardinge. He concurs with me in thinking that no arrangement which could be made here at present would have the effect of relieving Lord Gough from the command during the period which remains of the season for military operations. These must terminate in March ; in April the heats commence, and the troops must then quit the field. On the whole, he thinks, and I concur with him in thinking, that it would be best to allow Lord Gough to continue serving for the time, and to make an arrangement for his permanent relief as soon as may be possible, and send the officer out to relieve him. I saw Sir Charles Napier yesterday. He now appears little inclined to go to India. He considers the authorities of the E. India Company's government so hostile to him, and their feelings and prejudices so violent against him, that he should scarcely be able to perform his duty.

From the Duke of Wellington

February 15, 1849.

I send you a letter this morning received the contents of which will shew you that it must have astonished me as much as it will your Lordship. It is quite clear that we must look for another Commander-in-Chief in India. These are the names which I submit to you, always supposing Sir Charles Napier out of the question. 1. Lord Seton. 2. Sir Alexander Woodford. 3. Sir James Macdonnell. 4. The Earl Cathcart. 5. Lt.-General Sir W. Gomm. 6. Lord Saltoun.

From the Duke of Wellington

February 21, 1849.

I did not know that Lord Saltoun had been unwell. He has not been in London this winter ; and I don't know whether he would undertake service in India. He

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served in China a few years ago. Lord Seaton is an officer of reputation, but he never commanded excepting in North America. Sir W. Gomm is highly esteemed and as accomplished an officer as is in the service, and has had much experience in the movements of large bodies at the Staff of large armies although not in command. I have reason to believe that his health is good and that he is willing to go anywhere. He is in Mauritius and might be ordered to India immediately. I will enquire about Lord Seaton's health and inclinations to go to India, and will let you know more to-morrow. These men are about of the same age with the Senior Major-Generals of the Army. I don't think that it would be possible to find one materially younger excepting Lord Frederick FitzClarence. There is Sir Henry Smith who is at the Cape, who has an excellent reputation and well deserved.

From Lord Dalhousie

Camp, Ferozepore : March 2, 1849.

I am glad *at last* to be able to gratify the hope expressed in your letter that you would soon hear good tidings from us. The Commander-in-Chief on February 21 gained a crushing victory over the Sikhs and Afghans. This time he made ample use of his artillery, and fairly cannonaded them out of their position. The army then advanced, and the Sikhs fled in utter rout. We have fifty-three out of fifty-nine guns and all his camp-baggage and vast magazines of ammunition. The troops are across the Jhelum, and I hope soon to walk Dost Mahomed out of Peshawar. Unless something very crooked should happen, I now see land through the mist of my troubles here. I truly hope you may find a way through the graver difficulties which surround the Empire. These are hard times for Prime Ministers. However, you may comfort yourself by reflecting that you are better off than the Premier of the King of Oude, who, by a report I have just received, was attacked on his way to the Cabinet by

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all the grooms of the Royal Stables, and pelted out of the town with brickbats because he would not pay their wages ! Your way through Pimlico is safe, at all events !

From the Duke of Wellington

March 5, 1849.

I have seen Sir Charles Napier. He is very sensible of the honour done him by the consideration of him upon the present occasion ; but he is very apprehensive of the consequences of undertaking such a charge in the difficult circumstances existing, and knowing the animosity against him of the E. India Company, the Court of Directors and their servants. I assured him of the confidence and support of the Government and of the Governor-General in India. He said that he understood that his health was failing, and it was obvious that he was really afraid that he might not be fairly dealt with by his successor. He begged to delay to give his answer for some days—that is till to-morrow morning. I will let you know as soon as I shall hear from him. He talks with much diffidence of himself and his own capacity and actions. He says that well supported he was enabled to serve well on a small scale, but that he feels great diffidence in undertaking such a charge under the circumstances.

From Sir Charles Wood

March 6, 1849.

Did Hobhouse tell you what Hardinge said to him last night ? That Dalhousie had written home to announce his intention when all this war was over of blowing up the Government for leaving Lord Gough—and Hardinge's own saying to Hobhouse in the most handsome manner that if anybody was to blame for Gough's remaining, he (Hardinge) was more to blame than anybody. If Sir C. N. declines, I incline more strongly on thinking it over to superseding all by Hardinge as Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. If there is any general disturbance throughout

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India, and though Dalhousie wrote confidently, there had been no time for the news of the action to produce its effect on the discontented spirits throughout India, it would be of the utmost consequence to have the whole control and responsibility in one firm hand, capable of organising the means of operating on a large scale, and with vigour enough to direct the ultimate operations. He, too, would be able to appreciate the capabilities of the officers on the spot, and to entrust commands to them according to their abilities. I think that something should be done to produce an *effect* in India. Our empire is very much one of opinion, and even the *expected* arrival of a successful Governor-General and Commander might do much to prevent the outbreak of that feeling against our rule, the existence of which is notorious.

From Sir John Hobhouse

March 7, 1849.

I send you the letter which I have written to Lord Dalhousie, and which, all circumstances considered, I think he ought to receive from me. I do not conceal from you that I think it very probable he will, on the receipt of such a letter as you propose to write to him, and of this letter also, resign his office. But, after what has occurred, such a consequence would not be much to be deplored.

From Sir John Hobhouse

March 8, 1849.

I return your letter, which will mollify Lord Dalhousie, supposing my missive should put his back up. The 'distinguished abilities' will reconcile him to any gentle reproof contained in the other phrases of your letter.

From Lord Dalhousie

Simla : April 20, 1849.

I have had the honour of receiving your letter of March 8, in which you fully authorised me to adopt such

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measures as I might judge necessary regarding the command of this army in the field. I beg to offer you my best thanks for the authority which you gave, and for the discretion you left to me, as well as for your assurance of support in the course which I might select. Your Lordship's Government has given a steady support to my acts ever since I served under it; and I beg to say that, whatever rumours you may hear to the contrary, I have always acknowledged that support both in public and in private. Sir John Hobhouse will probably have informed you that early in February I prepared him for my taking on my own responsibility, if circumstances occurred to demand it, the strong measure to which you have adverted. I did not do so at once after Chillianwalla, because it was a step which should not be taken except under the pressure of absolute necessity—a necessity which in my opinion did not as yet exist to an extent sufficient to justify me as the *Head of the local Government* in acting. The action of Chillianwalla was an unquestionable defeat of the Sikhs. To call it a victory was perhaps *poetical*; but it was in truth a great battle gained, though the success was incomplete, and the loss disproportionately great. It was very necessary for me to betray no appearance of regarding it as a failure. If we had really failed, I would not, contrary to truth, have asserted success; but, having gained a success, it was my duty to make the best of it. The C.-in-C. had entrenched himself; he had sixty to seventy guns, and with ordinary prudence only he was safe. The force had been ordered up from Moultan with all speed, and every day brought it nearer to him. When the whole of his very large force should be united, it was impossible to suppose that any serious misfortune could occur, even if errors were committed. At the same time I hoped that experience of the past, the large force in his hands, and the warnings he had received as to the use of it, would produce a different result in the next action which might be fought. I, therefore, did not take then the

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extreme measure which, on the repetition of error, I was resolved to adopt ; and I trust you will consider that the way in which the battle of Gougerat was fought and won had justified my forbearance. If the result of that action had been such as to have a formidable or a troublesome war still before us, I should not have hesitated to transfer the command of the army in the field to the officer best qualified to hold it. Personally I shall be delighted to have the co-operation of Sir C. Napier in command of the army. I earnestly hope, however, that he may never have to take the field with it.

From Lord Lansdowne

May, 1849.

I return the India papers. There can be no doubt of the expediency of sanctioning the annexation of the Punjaub, which has forced itself down our throat while we were shewing a very decent repugnance to swallow it. Lord Dalhousie has not, in more than one instance, shewn quite a right feeling to the Government which sent him out, but upon such an occasion it will be magnanimous to forget it, and the reward of a promotion in the peerage does not seem more than commensurate to the service performed.

To Lord Dalhousie

June 5, 1849.

The importance of the success which has been attained in the late war, and the eminent position which you have held in directing the forces of India in overwhelming numbers against the enemy to his final overthrow, have induced me to advise the Queen to confer upon you some distinguished mark of Her gracious approbation. Her Majesty has in consequence been pleased to direct that you should be raised to the dignity of a Marquis of the United Kingdom. I trust that this honour may strengthen your just authority in India, and be considered as a proof that our countrymen in India are not neglected

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at home. Although I hope with you that Sir Charles Napier may never take the field, yet I doubt not that his abilities will be found of great service in the military and economical administration of the Army of India.

From Lord Dalhousie

Simla : July 23, 1849.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of June 5, in which you did me the honour of intimating to me that in pursuance of your Lordship's advice Her Majesty had been pleased, as a mark of her gracious approbation, to confer upon me the dignity of a Marquis of the United Kingdom. I beg to offer to your Lordship the assurance of my deep and enduring gratitude for this most distinguished mark of Her Majesty's approval of my public conduct in the government which has been entrusted to me. It has been my desire to serve the country with fidelity and devotion; and so long as my frame may endure, such humble service as I can give will ever be, to the very utmost, at Her Majesty's command. Your Lordship, I trust, will permit me to add how truly sensible I am of your kindness in suggesting for me the honour I have received, and how gratified I am by the terms in which you have announced it to me. From your Lordship I have received full, cordial and generous support; and I heartily hope that so long as I may remain in India I shall continue to retain your confidence and to earn your approval of my acts.

From John Bright

November 1, 1850.

Before you become involved in the Cabinet meetings which engage the three months immediately preceding the meeting of Parliament, I venture to write to you on a subject probably as important as any that relate to the trade and industry of the country. I was unsuccessful last session in my motion for a commission of enquiry

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to India, but I have always believed that your refusal of the commission was given with great hesitation, and rather from deference to the Board of Control and the India Company than from any conviction that the enquiry was unnecessary. I never could discover a single valid reason against the commission, and I venture to say that no motion made in Parliament was ever opposed on more flimsy or unsatisfactory pretences. My object, however, in obtruding upon your time now is to state that the prospects of the trade of Lancashire are if possible more gloomy than last year, arising entirely from the failure last year, and from apprehended and almost certain failure this year, of the American cotton crop. Cotton is double its natural price, and a large portion of the whole trade is carried on at a serious loss, and none but the very finest branches, where the cost of cotton is not of much consequence, is conducted with a profit. I can assure you that this question is one of serious import, and that it deserves the anxious consideration of Government. We do not ask for bounties, or protection, or encouragement, or even sympathy, from the Government; but we do ask that when it is believed, on adequate grounds, that one of the dependencies of the Empire is well qualified by soil, climate and population at once to supply us with raw material, and to become, to a much greater extent than is now the case, the customer for our manufactures, and when there is strong reason for believing that the obstacles which interpose are either those which Government has made, or which Government can remove—I say we do ask that this great question should be enquired into, and the public anxiety upon it set at rest. A Government Commission could not be charged with partiality; it would have a high character and great powers; and I believe the result of its enquiry would tend to preserve the British Empire in India, and add to the wealth and prosperity of the population both of India and of England.

CHAPTER XI

THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

THE friendly confidence existing between London and Paris had been destroyed by the Spanish marriages, and so long as Louis Philippe ruled over France it proved impossible to mend the wires. The tension is clearly revealed in the vivid letters of Lord Normanby, the British Ambassador, and in the outspoken comments of Palmerston. The July Monarchy was an expedient, not a principle, and it never struck deep roots in the soil of a country where Legitimism, Bonapartism, Republicanism and Socialism competed for the allegiance of the people. The tragic death of the King's eldest son in 1842 confronted France with the prospect of a prolonged and nerveless Regency, while the final blow was struck by Guizot himself, whose invincible repugnance to a democratic franchise led him to prohibit the Reform banquets at the opening of 1848. The eleventh-hour substitution of Molé and the abdication of the King in favour of his grandson were of no avail. On February 24 the dynasty was overthrown, the Republic was proclaimed, and Louis Philippe fled across the Channel to end his stormy career in peaceful retirement at Claremont, the residence of his son-in-law, the King of the Belgians.¹

The revival of a French Republic, with its associations of revolution and aggression, sent a shudder

¹ See Guizot, *Mémoires*, vol. viii., and Thureau-Dangin, *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet*. For the French Republic see La Gorce, *Histoire de la Seconde République Française*, and Simpson, *Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France*.

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through the Chancelleries of Europe. The alarm was increased by Lamartine's circular instructions to the representatives of France abroad, declaring that the treaties of 1815 were not sacrosanct. Friends of the gentle poet, whose bewitching eloquence had borne him to power, knew that his declaration was a flourish of rhetoric, not a threat of war; and the apprehensions which agitated the nerves of the Continent only aroused a faint echo in Great Britain. Within a few days of his appointment to the Foreign Office he sent a reassuring message to the Duke of Wellington, and informed a deputation of Irish malcontents that he could not interfere in the affairs of an independent State. Lord John and his colleagues were naturally anxious as to the repercussions of the explosion, but they were never gravely alarmed. Palmerston, indeed, welcomed the change which terminated the public career of his old and unforgiven antagonists, Guizot and Louis Philippe.

The members of the Provisional Government were agreed in nothing save their republican faith; and when the General Election returned a majority of moderates, the mob of Paris, fearing that they might be deprived of the relief-works established by Louis Blanc, rose in May and again in June in fierce revolt. General Cavaignac was summoned by the Assembly to restore order, and as President of the Council grasped the reins which fell from the feeble hands of Lamartine. The position of the British Ambassador in a country of unstable equilibrium was repeatedly discussed by the Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister, and the Queen; but it was believed in London that France would before long once more enjoy a settled Government, and Normanby remained at his post.¹ Cavaignac received the same consideration as

¹ Normanby told his own story in *A Year of Revolution*, published in 1857.

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Lamartine, and when Louis Napoleon was elected President of the Republic in December, 1848, it was felt that a fresh guarantee against revolution had been found. In the following year, however, clear-sighted observers like Princess Lieven discerned the shadow of the Second Empire on the horizon.

From Lord Lansdowne

February, 1848.

I had a long letter from Mrs. Austin last night; quite safe and the town quite quiet (Sunday). Much importance is attached to Normanby's remaining, who is personally popular with the people, 'parceque il a été mal traité par l'infâme Guizot.' The greatest *égards* shewn to him and even to English families in general. La Martine at issue with some of his colleagues, but determined (he says) to die rather than give way. He is quite for peace and no invasion of other territories. Political economy at a great discount with the new Government, but for that see the newspapers.

From Lord Spencer¹ to the Duke of Bedford

March 6, 1848.

I am very glad Lord John has gone out of town, as I have been very anxious about his health, and I trust the little relaxation he may get now will do him good, but it cannot be real rest, as his mind will be as much worked with these awful times as if he were here. I call them awful, not from what has taken place but from the feeling everybody must have that we stand on the crust of liquid fire and may at any moment break through into the crater. The Circular of Lamartine does not reassure one much, though I think it may be understood in any way he may be pleased to explain it. The Tories here are very violent about it, and say that the declaration is

¹ Fourth Earl; succeeded his brother in 1845.

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tantamount to one of war. Thank God they are not in power. I believe that had they been we should already be at war. I consider that Lord John having been at the head of affairs at this crisis was a providential blessing, for which I deeply and earnestly thank God. As far as it has been within our power this country stands in a most dignified and constitutional position; but it is impossible to believe that any Republic with a standing army of 400,000 and with the solemn engagement to find work and food for the whole population of a great country can stand. The only question is how long it may last. The ex-King and Queen have been at the Palace to pay a visit to the Queen and have gone back to Claremont. They have now, I hear, got money, so that the Queen's purse is no longer called upon to support them. It is said that letters from Paris talk of some umbrage by the most violent that the attentions have been too great to the fallen people. I do not believe in any way has more been done than the declaration of hospitality made by Lord John will justify; but one must expect such things.

From Lord Lansdowne

March 7, 1848.

La Martine's manifesto has produced a different effect on different people; but the majority, and I am told particularly in the city, consider it as more offensive and threatening than they expected. Great allowance must however be made for his position, which can only be maintained for the present by trimming.

To Lord Lansdowne

March 8, 1848.

I think ill of Lamartine's Manifesto. In the first place he had better not have written it at all. But its vagueness alarms more than it surprises. The mode of election too disquiets me. Separate elections by 10,000 electors might have produced orderly men; elections

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of ten by 100,000 will give a *caucus* as in America, and the Moderates will be excluded. But what then? If this is to come I trust the building will fall inwardly and not on the passengers in the public street. *Licuit sperare timenti* is all I have for it. At all events I do not expect the French will make war directly, so that we have time to consider what we shall do. Your correspondent sees justly and well. A good Republic is the only chance at present. The Count de Paris five or ten years hence may be taken as a *pis aller*.

From the Duke of Wellington

March 11, 1848.

Mr. Wellesley returned from Paris last night, and brought me a letter from Mons. de La Martine, of which I enclose a copy. He certainly places me in an anomalous position; and he has greatly aggravated the difficulties thereof by the course which he and the Provisional Government have taken, and by the publication of his intentions to the diplomattick representatives of France at the different Courts of Europe. The Provisional Government, endowed with the powers of peace and war, exercises the same to the full extent without hesitation. To insist that the Government *de facto* and eventually the Republic to be appointed shall succeed to all the rights and privileges of the King of the French under the provisions of the several Treaties of Peace and otherwise is one thing and may be and is reasonable, provided the French Government undertakes to perform its part of the several engagements. But not only is the intention announced of proposing alterations in the Treaties of Peace by which all the Powers of Europe are bound, but of making such alterations as may give to France a right to interfere in the internal Government of other States and their dependencies. Such an arrangement would lead to little less than perpetual war. If such pretensions had been admitted into the Treaties of 1814-1815, we should have had King Louis Philippe

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interfering in the insurrection in Canada in 1837, and in Ireland in 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843. Then I am called upon to promote an Alliance between Her Majesty and the French Republick. I don't know that I can have any influence upon such a question. But if I had, neither I nor, as I believe, any Englishman could desire to see Her Majesty allied with the French Republick in interference in the internal government of other countries. I think it best to give no answer to M. La Martine. Nor shall I unless your Lordship should think it useful that I should.

To the Duke of Wellington

March 12, 1848.

M. Lamartine puts us all in a difficult position. In conversation with Lord Normanby he entirely assents to the maxim of the Law of Nations that no changes in the internal form of the Govt. can change the obligations contracted towards foreign powers, and he disclaims all intention of interfering in the internal concerns of other States. At the same time his circular lays down the freedom from the treaties of 1815, which M. Lamartine declares is too popular in France to be resisted, and some strange phrases about Providence sounding the hour of independence give scope for interference at any moment when the Govt. of the National Assembly may declare that hour to have sounded. I see no course open to us but to take M. Lamartine's professions in the most pacific sense without relying too much on his power of making good his means. On the other hand the destruction of the Free State of Cracow last year gave M. Guizot ground for saying that, as other Powers had violated the treaty of Vienna, France was only bound so long as she chose to be so. I think your Grace need not write again to M. Lamartine. But it may be as well that your Grace should send him a civil message that you had received his letter, which did not require any answer on your part.

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From Lord Palmerston

April 26, 1848.

You must no doubt have made the same reflexion which Normanby makes, and which had already occurred to me, namely that a procession of 300,000, or even of 200,000, armed men in Paris augurs but ill for the future peace of Europe. I trust that we may be able to keep out of war, but there can be no doubt that there exists in France a feeling of hostility to England. It is lucky that our defensive preparations are going on, and I trust that we shall have some muskets and some cannon before any real danger comes upon us.

From Lord Normanby

April 26, 1848.

I told Lamartine this morning what you said, at which he was much pleased. He said you had always been very good to him. I found him very uneasy about the immediate present, not as to the result of the struggle but thinking that there was very likely to be one before the Assembly meets, and his great desire is that the Government should hold together when it does meet. But he says the others seem almost decided upon trying the barricades again. He adds they will only be able to do enough to get themselves killed. But I do not like to hear of this, as unfortunately much more depends on *one* life on the side of order and peace than on the other.

From Lord Palmerston

June 3, 1848.

I may be mistaken, but I should say that, looking to nothing but the interests of the French Royal Family, it would be better that no change whatever should be made in their mode of life until the arrangements respecting their fortunes and property have been decided; and I should be much inclined to doubt the prudence in this respect even of the visit of the Duchess of Nemours to

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Osborne, seeing that of course it will be put into the newspapers. There is no telling how anything of this kind might be made a handle of in Paris by those who are hostile to the Family ; and when one cannot see the exact effect of a step, which may have a bearing upon matters of great importance to the persons concerned, it is perhaps best to do nothing.

From Lord Normanby

June 19, 1848.

Your speculation as to the advent of a President rather than the success of a Pretender is as good as any other when every day some new turn of events upsets some supposed probability. At the moment you were writing it the Commission of the Constitution was very nearly settling to have no President but a Directory, believing that a President if elected by universal suffrage would *now* be Louis Napoleon, and that with a view to his being King or Emperor. However, I rather think their present experience of what a Directory is made them reject this, and if the election is not for some weeks or months Louis Napoleon may be forgotten for some newer fancy. They have in the meantime a very awkward crisis to pass in dealing with the *ateliers nationaux*, whilst the Provinces are in the greatest state of discontent with the Government. The Assembly collectively shews great want of courage, and the nation as yet looks in vain for any one superior man to get them out of the scrape.

From Lord Palmerston

July 6, 1848.

It would be well to think twice before we determined to abolish the Embassy. The present state of things in France is too evidently temporary to be the foundation for permanent arrangements, and moreover we have no reason to think that the present rulers mean to abolish Embassies, or that they do not mean ultimately to send

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an Ambassador here, though at present they would accredit only a Minister. As to the Queen's objection to having an Ambassador from the French Republic, that is not a feeling upon which the British Government can act.

From Edward Ellice

Paris : July 17, 1848.

You told me to write what I saw and heard here, and here is my first bulletin. If one had been shut out from all communication with the world, and had been asleep for the last five months, it would have been difficult, from outward appearances, to have imagined the scenes and revolution that have occurred in Paris. With the exception of fewer private carriages in the streets yesterday, there was the same gay and well dressed throng of men and women—the Cirque, a large enclosure for equestrian exhibitions, and the Jardin d'Hiver, crowded with people, who paid their one and two francs for admission, and the promenades in the Champs Elysées and Tuileries, as well attended as I ever recollect them. The whole road, and the towns and villages all the way from Boulogne, were in their usual quiet state ; and the country, especially the vallies of the Oise, and Montmorency, in surpassing beauty and teeming with abundance. The same account was given me by all parties at Thiers' re-union last night of other districts of the country—an abundant harvest and vintage, and no alarm of failure in the potatoes. So far on the surface, so well. There are no appearances either of *malaise* below it, or of any vast precautions, beyond the encampments in the outskirts of the town against any apprehended renewal of *émeutes*. Still, nobody feels security ; nobody is satisfied with the existing state of affairs, or pretends to hazard a judgment on the *avenir*.

I saw a great deal of Thiers yesterday, and had two long conversations with him. I have *géné'd* myself by accepting a kind offer of apartments from Rothschild,

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and could not accept Thiers' invitation to meet Chagnier, Vivien, and Cousin at dinner. He says they are all doing their best to form a rational state of public opinion, and to support order, but professes an utter incapacity to see a fortnight beyond him. Nous avons la république—il faut s'en user—nous sommes dans les mains de quelques généraux d'Afrique—braves gens—qui savent bien leur métier—mais au delà ? And he is more than gloomy on affairs of finance, credit, and trade. Money is voted for anything. The public are expected to supply the deficiencies created in any quarter and department of industry by the destruction or exportation of credit and capital, and the increasing wants of the public service, while the revenue is daily falling off. No capitalist will hear of loans, and the only resource is additional paper, borrowed from the Bank. Some of their devices to reanimate their manufactures, and to stimulate employment by fictitious means, require our attention. They have already begun, and are bent on pursuance in, a system of bounties on the exportation of manufactures. But a more serious affair is the decision to put in activity all the ateliers at their naval stations (said by Sir J. Hastings in his evidence before our Committee to be twice as extensive as those at Woolwich and Portsmouth) for the manufacture of naval steam engines. Unfortunately the suspension of work here places at their disposal a large number of skilled artisans for this purpose. The peace lovers and economists in the Chamber will scarcely be listened to in resisting these absurdities.

Political parties are divided into three sections. The Government and the republicans *de la veille*, supported by a club of representatives under the Presidency of old Dupont de l'Eure, *républicains de bonne foi*. Second, the *gauche dynastique* under the former Government, having attached to them a very considerable portion of the Chamber, in a Club influenced if not led by Thiers, and numbering about 300 Deputies, professing republicans,

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supporting Cavaignac, equally with the others, as the champion of order and security. Third, a small party of Communists, Socialists, and *red* Republicans, led by the more violent faction in the first Provisional Government, having strong sympathies with the enemies of all order and peace out of doors. Cavaignac has not as yet enlisted in his ministry any member of the second party, altho' he evidently leans upon them as much for advice as his doubts of the sincerity of their republican principles will allow him. He knows also that their opinions, whether sincerely republican or not, are the opinions of the vast majority of the French nation. Thiers is equally bitter against Guizot and Lamartine. He says they owe their ruin entirely to Guizot's *entêtement*, since without his assistance the King could not have persevered in his resistance to Reform, and that if 100,000 more electors had been added to the constituency the National Guard would have willingly maintained order against the *Prolétaires*. He accuses Lamartine of being the author of the late outbreak. He first prevented the Regency, which Dupont and Garnier-Pagès would have accepted, and having arrived at the power which his ambition coveted, he stooped to any concession to maintain it, even to sanction revolt as an ally, and that he was frequently cognisant both of the supply of arms to the *canaille* and the use they were expected to make of them. Thiers would not listen to my commendations of Lamartine's last speech upon foreign affairs. He said it was an affected moderation to endeavour to regain popularity. I find the general opinion on this point to coincide very much with that of Thiers.

From Lord Palmerston

August 4, 1848.

As we are about to co-operate diplomatically with France the time seems come for exchanging regular credentials. We have now got a respectable though not a permanent head of the Government in France; and

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Normanby says that their definitive arrangements may perhaps not be completed till November, and that would be long to wait for. We shall soon be almost the only Power except Russia that will not have established regular diplomatic relations with France. I would propose to accredit Normanby for the present as Ambassador; the footing of our future relations might be afterwards settled.

From Lord Palmerston

August 10, 1848.

Pray read with attention this letter from Normanby. The matter to which it relates is of great importance, and requires immediate decision. The objection felt by the Queen to receiving an Ambassador from a Republican Government in France is a natural and intelligible one, but it is one which could not be stated and put forward as a ground for the conduct of the Government; and I am not aware of any stateable reason which could be assigned for declining to receive here and accredit at Paris Ambassadors, if the French Government propose such an arrangement. The only ground upon which our establishment at Paris could be reduced to the rank of a Mission would be the decision of the French Government only to send a Minister here, for I deem it my duty distinctly to say that, if the question is to turn upon the decision of the British Government, my opinion and conviction is that such a change would be disadvantageous to the public interest. But this question admits of postponement. That which must be decided within four and twenty hours is in what way our diplomatic relations are to be placed upon an official footing at Paris; and upon reading Normanby's letter I come back to the opinion, which I submitted to the Queen, that credentials ought to be sent to Normanby as Ambassador Extraordinary on a special Mission. Normanby is, I must say, right in declining to present credentials as Minister; to recall him now and send

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somebody else as Minister would be excessively awkward, and liable to much misinterpretation. He has been acting unofficially, with his former rank in abeyance for six months, to the satisfaction of his own Government and to the contentment of that of France. During all that time he was only treating matters in general ; and, if now, when events of the greatest importance have driven us into active co-operation with the French Government with a view to maintain the Peace of Europe, by restraining the military action of France, and negotiating between Austria and Italy ; and if just at that very moment when every day and almost every hour may bring questions requiring action of some kind at Paris, we were to bring away Normanby and send somebody else, it would either appear to be a reflexion upon Normanby, and a proof of want of confidence in him ; or it would be considered by the French as a manifestation of want of good will towards them and as an act of discourtesy at the very moment when we are asking them to sacrifice their own inclinations in deference to our wishes, and to shape their policy in accordance with ours.

From Lord Normanby

August 20, 1848.

I received yesterday your letter expressing a wish that I should speak for you to General Cavaignac on the subject of the private fortunes of the French Princes. General Cavaignac, as I should have expected from all I had ever seen of him, thoroughly entered into our feelings on the subject. He said that whatever might be decided as to the *domaine privé* of the King, there could not be a second opinion that it would be most unjust to seize upon the private fortunes of the Princes and the 'dots' of the Princesses. He said, however, that the difficulty for the moment was that all had been comprised in one common sequestration by the Provisional Government, and that could not in consequence

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be raised without a Decree of the National Assembly ; and he doubted whether it would not be imprudent just now when passions were so much excited and there were so many accusations even against the Government of reaction to bring forward a question of this nature. The family could lose nothing by delay, as the disposition of the country was evidently likely to become more favourable to such an act of justice. The tendency was by no means towards confiscation. I represented to the General that, though this might be all very true and everyone was disposed to make allowance for his peculiar position, yet that he must also remember how hard it must be upon personages in this position of life to have been now for so many months positively without any resources, because they were forcibly debarred the use of that which everyone admitted was indisputably their own.

From Princess Lieven

Richmond : September 6, 1848.

Je viens de lire le discours royal à la clôture de Parlement, et je ne puis m'empêcher de venir vous en faire mon compliment très sincère. Je trouve ce discours d'une convenance, d'une mesure parfaite. Dans tout ce qui est relatif à l'Étranger, c'est d'un bon goût, excellent, pour tout le reste très énergique, très frappant, très grand, très utile. Beau langage, grande et imposante situation en face de toutes ces hideuses révolutions qui déshonorent l'Europe. Enfin je suis très exaltée sur votre discours et j'ai voulu vous le dire. Du reste, ce n'est pas de moi que vous attendez des nouvelles, je ne sais rien, je regarde, je ne m'inquiète pas trop. La France ne fera pas la guerre, elle n'en a ni le désir ni les moyens de mourir, de s'en aller à la banqueroute et à la république rouge. Des bravades tant qu'il vous plaira, mais pas autre chose. Je n'ai pas oublié l'année 1840. Le roi Louis Philippe brandissant son épée sur la tête de tous les diplomates qu'il mettait à la muraille dans ses

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salons de St. Cloud, et bien résolu dans son for intérieur de ne pas faire la guerre. Les modernes feront de même, les républicains comme les rois. On dit beaucoup que les royalistes des deux branches s'entendent parfaitement pour faire avant toutes choses choisir partout et pour tout des hommes d'ordre et des hommes de leur opinion. Cette fusion est en tout cas une bonne affaire, à quelque prétendant qu'elle profite. Ah, la Monarchie, pourvu qu'elle revienne !

From Lord Palmerston

December 22, 1848.

I will send Normanby what you say about the son of Jerome as permanent Ambassador here ; but by what Normanby says in this letter it seems that there is no intention of so appointing him. With regard, however, to his special mission to announce the election of his cousin as President, I really do not see that we could, with a good grace, make any objection to it. Any such objection could be founded only upon his name and family, and would glance off from him and hit more pointedly the new President, and this would not be auspicious for our international relations.

From Lord Londonderry

June 14, 1849.

I never had a doubt about the fear of the demoralisation of the French Army ; I have known them too well. There may be a few Serjeants and Socialists ; but the mass (be assured) are in their *Esprit de Corps* as *our own Troops*, and I stated this in the H. of Lords. I have seen very much of Louis Napoleon. He protested to me, out of 60,000 garrison in Paris, there were not three or four hundred Socialists. The event seems to prove he was not mistaken. I feel every confidence in his pluck, firmness, and prudence. And as it is quite in vain to look for any union of sentiment or opinion between the Legitimists and the Orleanists, my firm

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belief is that the *President* is *now* the best instrument to preserve anything like order and tranquillity in France, on which the peace of the world now hangs.

To Lord Lansdowne

October 31, 1849.

I am very glad you are going to Paris just now, and I hope your visit will not be postponed. The reason is that I have very odd accounts of Normanby's proceedings there. I am told that Molé and the whole of the moderate party, who are the majority of the Assembly, are very much offended with him for some advice he is supposed to have given the President. The letter I send you, and which I beg you will return to Palmerston, rather countenances this supposition, as it contemplates doing away with the present Assembly. Now as I regard the present Assembly, with its immense majority in favour of the moderate party, as a great necessity for stability and order in France, I am somewhat alarmed at these reports. As I am sure you and I should agree in our observations and opinions, I must ask you to sift the matter and ascertain what part our Ambassador is taking in French politicks.

From Princess Lieven

Paris : November 2, 1849.

Grand coup de théâtre ici, si non coup d'état. C'est sans doute la préface. Elle n'a point de succès. La critique et le mécontentement sont généraux. La majorité est très blessée. Elle se concerte ce matin sur la conduite à tenir dans la séance de ce jour. Thiers votera pour qu'on appuie en se taisant. D'autres voudraient *a qualification* du silence, et qu'on rappelle à l'Élu du 10 Décembre qu'il y a des Élus du 13 Mai. Nous verrons dans quelques heures. La Montagne s'amuse aux dépens de ses adversaires dans l'embarras. Le public se moque, mais ne s'agite pas encore. Changarnier est très décidé à un pas se dessaisir de son autorité quoi qu'il

arrive. C'est tout ce qu'il faut aux poltrons dont j'ai l'honneur d'être. Thiers que j'ai vu hier longtemps me dit que le Prince vise bien plus au pouvoir qu'au titre. Le gouvernement personnel, voilà se qu'il veut. On ne le tolérerait pas dans Louis Philippe ; acceptera-t'on davantage dans un homme sans expérience ? Le renvoi du Ministre a été brusque. Cela sent un peu l'autocrate. Enfin tout est curieux dans ce moment. Je voudrais toujours passer une matinée à Paris, et une soirée à Pembroke Lodge.

From Princess Lieven

Paris : November 5, 1849.

Si je vous avais écrit hier, je vous aurais dit ' Vive l'Empire dans peu de semaines.' Aujourd'hui j'en suis moins sûre. On doute, on trouve l'exécution si difficile, je ne sais que penser. Rester stationnaire après le message c'est reculer ; reculer c'est se perdre. Avancer serait peut-être se perdre aussi. Cependant je penche à croire qu'il vaut mieux tenter l'aventure, et qu'elle sera tentée. Nous verrons. Les gros bonnets, Molé, Thiers, ne sont pas de cet avis. En attendant, la majorité d'abord si courroucée du message a pris le bon parti, le seul logique, de soutenir le nouveau Cabinet. Il y a des nuances, Berryer par exemple très blessé ; le soutien sera donc un peu équivoque cependant, toutes fois qu'il s'agira de bonnes mesures à prendre, le parti conservateur se retrouvera tout entier ; les hommes considérables prendront la parole pour les soutenir. Mais que deviendra le Ministère dans ses luttes personnelles quotidiennes avec la Montagne ? Il n'y a pas un homme capable de résistance efficace dans ces discussions si pressantes et si vives. Ce sera un pauvre spectacle. Les ministres appartiennent tous à la majorité. Ils sont en même temps, ou passent peut-être, personnellement attirés au Président, surtout le Ministre des Finances et celle de l'Intérieur. Dans le gros du public le message, qui avait déplu au premier moment, a fait son chemin depuis.

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Il est pris comme un acte de courage. On le prône et on dit ' Enfin il a compris pourquoi nous l'avions élu.' Voilà la disposition des rues. Celle de la Chambre, c'est de résister à tout *encroachment* à la Constitution, ce n'est donc pas par elle que pouvait se faire le coup d'état. S'il se fait d'une autre façon, il faudra bien courber la tête. Est-ce que la majorité irait se battre pour la république qu'elle déteste ? Cela n'est pas possible.

*From Ralph Abercromby*¹

Paris : November 6, 1849.

The first feeling of astonishment occasioned by the sudden dismissal of the whole late French Cabinet is now subsiding. People do not contest the point of the President having the right to act as he has done ; but I can hear of no party anywhere that is willing to share the responsibility he has thereby incurred with him. The most that is promised is not to embarrass the new Cabinet, and everybody throws the whole responsibility of the measure, be it for good, or be it for evil, upon the President individually. It is impossible to believe that a step so important as the one lately taken by the President is not connected in his mind with something in the future, and that he is not thus preparing the ground for another move some time hence. Some people believe that the next step will not be immediate, but nobody is of opinion that things are to remain as they are. The choice that the President has made of his new Ministers is sufficient proof that he intends to govern by himself ; and as he has succeeded in impressing the public with the belief that he is for the preservation of order above everything, they are satisfied to allow him to try his hand alone, in spite of the danger of establishing a despot.

¹ Brother-in-law of Lady John Russell ; later Lord Dunfermline.

CHAPTER XII

THE REVOLUTION IN ITALY

I. THE MINTO MISSION

THE election of a reforming Pope in 1846 was warmly welcomed in England, where the frowns of Metternich increased the sympathy for the new regime. In July, 1847, when the popularity of Pio Nono reached its height, and when even Mazzini hailed him as the leader of Italian nationalism, a reactionary conspiracy was discovered in Rome, and an Austrian force entered the city of Ferrara 'to support the authority of the Pope.' A summons from the Vatican to withdraw the troops was ignored; the populace clamoured for war with Austria, and the Pope blessed the little army which was ordered north. The enthusiasm of Liberal Italy, however, was not enough, and the Pope turned for aid to England. Official relations, which were broken off in the sixteenth century, had never been restored, and business was transacted through an attaché of the Florence Legation residing at Rome; but the Pope found a channel of communication in Wiseman,¹ who had journeyed to Rome in July to discuss the creation of a territorial hierarchy, and who returned home in September charged with the duty of explaining the achievements and the difficulties of the Holy Father and of asking for the moral support of a diplomatic mission. The wishes of the Vatican had reached London before Wiseman visited

¹ See Ward, *Life of Cardinal Wiseman*, i., chap. xvi. For Italian affairs see Bolton King, *History of Italian Unity*.

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Downing Street on September 11, and Lord Minto, Lord Privy Seal and father-in-law of the Prime Minister, had been selected to visit the principal Italian Courts. The British statesman, after taking a hand in Swiss politics on his way, was enthusiastically acclaimed as the voice of Liberal England, which most Italian nationalists and reformers regarded as their spiritual home. His dual task was to encourage Charles Albert and other rulers to introduce constitutional government, and to dissuade impatient idealists from recourse to revolution and war. How well it was performed we may read in his vivid reports.

When the Envoy reached Rome in 1847 the Liberal honeymoon was nearing its end. Austria had withdrawn her troops from the city of Ferrara, and the Pope was beginning to realise that he could not satisfy the extreme Left. In the changed situation, indeed, the mission proved in some respects an embarrassment to the Vatican. The occasion was nevertheless employed to discuss not only the reforms in the Papal States, but the restoration of diplomatic relations, the attitude of a section of the Catholic clergy in Ireland, led by McHale, Archbishop of Tuam, towards the unsectarian Queen's Colleges, and the lack of support afforded by the Church to the British Government in its struggle with Irish crime. Satisfied with his conversations and charmed by the personality of the Pope, Minto left Rome in January, 1848, for Naples, where the most difficult of his tasks awaited him. In Turin and Rome he had found respected and well-intentioned rulers. In Naples he found a King who was hated and despised by his subjects, and he was greeted by a revolution in Palermo, whither he journeyed with a mission to mediate. At this moment, however, the news of the overthrow of the French monarchy banished

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all notions of compromise, and he could only report that the hatred of the Neapolitan ruler was ineradicable. As he journeyed slowly homeward he learned of the revolt of Milan, the intervention of Charles Albert, and the victories of Radetzky. He might well lament that his work had been useless, for war had broken out in the north, the Pope and his subjects were drifting apart, Sicily was in revolt, and the attitude of the Church in Ireland was unchanged. Yet the mission was not wholly in vain, and the tactful sympathy of the British nobleman forged a fresh link in the chain which bound the heart of England to the cause of Italian liberty.

From Lord Palmerston

August 21, 1847.

I send you a letter and its inclosure which I received yesterday from Lord Shrewsbury. They are important. Why should we not act upon Dr. Wiseman's suggestion and send out at once to Rome on a special and temporary mission some such person as the one whom he describes? A person so sent might do some good about Irish as well as about Italian affairs. The person whom I should wish to entrust such a mission to, and whom I think particularly well qualified for it, is Minto. He unites all the conditions mentioned by Wiseman.

*From Ralph Abercromby*¹

Turin: August 31, 1847.

We are now looking forward to the arrival of Lord and Lady Minto. I wish I could think that you would give Lord M. sufficient holydays to make a run down to Rome. It seems to me that it might be quite possible without exciting too much observation for him to do so, being once on this side of the Alps on a *visit to us*, and I have no doubt that you would find on his return to the

¹ British Minister at Turin.

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Cabinet room in Downing Street that his time had been usefully employed. You will see that Tuscany even is throwing off the yoke of Austria, thus completing the link on the west coast of Italy between Rome and the Alps. Now that the Governments of Italy place themselves at the head of the movement in this peninsula, the affairs connected with its internal condition become of double importance, and they begin to assume a character of Nationality, which had always been wanting in the former disconnected attempts of Carbonari and Liberals. I can hardly suppose, whatever turn matters may take, that the affairs of Italy will not become a matter of general discussion amongst the Great Powers of Europe; for the recovery of Italian policy, as it has existed from 1815 to the present time, is already completely upset, and it will be the object no doubt of some of those Powers to endeavour to construct a new basis upon which the future policy of Italy is to be conducted. If such should be the case, I hope we—that is you and your Cabinet—will think it only just and right that Italian Governments should be admitted to partake in those discussions, which will be so intimately connected with their own most important internal interests. Such a course would do more to raise the moral feeling in Italy than almost anything that could be devised, for it would inspire amongst the people respect for their Governments, and shew that Italy had once more resumed a place as a respected and independent nation in the great European family.

From the Queen

September 4, 1847.

The Queen has received Lord John Russell's two letters of the 31st and 1st inst. and is glad to find that the views expressed in the Prince's memorandum coincide with those entertained by Lord John and Lord Palmerston, and also by Lord Minto as she infers. As it seems difficult to find a person of inferior rank and position than Lord Minto and of equal weight, the Queen

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sanctions his undertaking the mission on the understanding that the object of it will be communicated beforehand to the Courts of Vienna and Paris, and that both these Governments will be made fully acquainted with the position England thinks herself bound to take with regard to the Italian controversy. After this shall have been done the sending of Sir William Parker with his fleet to the west coast of Italy strikes the Queen as a very proper measure to give countenance to the Sovereigns engaged in liberal reform and exposed alike to the inroads of their absolutist neighbour, and to the outbreaks of popular movements directed by a republican party and perhaps fostered by the Austrian Government.

From Lord Palmerston

September 14, 1847.

I am glad we had determined on sending Minto before Wiseman arrived. If Minto was not off before Wiseman came, they will have had some useful talk. At all events our step has been taken on firm ground, and Minto is sure to be well and cordially received at Rome.

From Lord Minto

Berne : September 20, 1847.

We are just starting to proceed on our journey, and I have only time for a line. I think, as I have told Palmerston, that the affairs of this country may be peaceably settled if we can hold out a fair prospect of the Pope's intervention in withdrawing the Jesuits from every part of Switzerland.¹ This would be acceptable to a great majority on both sides. But Austria opposes it, and France here as elsewhere fans the flame of discord. So that I fear we cannot calculate upon any assistance from them at Rome in persuading the Pope to interpose his authority.

¹ The Catholic and Protestant cantons were engaged in the so-called War of the Sonderbund. For Minto's activities in Switzerland see Hall, *England and the Orleans Monarchy*, chap. ii.

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From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : September 25, 1847.

I received copies of Lord Palmerston's despatches to Lord Ponsonby on the affairs of Italy, with orders to communicate their contents to Count de la Marguerite. These documents seemed to be of such importance to this country and to the future prospects of Italy that I could not feel satisfied in trusting solely to Count de la Marguerite's memory for a faithful report of their contents to the King, and I therefore took upon myself to ask for an audience in order that I might read them myself to H.M. My audience took place last Wednesday, on which occasion I read to the King Lord Palmerston's despatches above alluded to ; and when that was done I told him that, with his permission, I would now read to him an extract from a private letter which I had just received from you, containing expressions of so encouraging a nature that I was desirous of conveying them to him in your own terms. I feel certain that the communication of this extract from your letter made a great impression on the King's mind, and I am in hopes that it may help to inspire him with confidence, not only in the safety, but in the wisdom of persevering in his support of a liberal course of policy for his own country as well as for the rest of Italy. The King's language to me was all that I could desire ; he expressed his unlimited confidence in the friendly dispositions of Great Britain, his satisfaction at the approval by you and your Cabinet of his conduct during the recent crisis, and his wish to avail himself of every opportunity to prove to Great Britain the sincerity of his attachment to and the real value he set upon the countenance and support of the British Government.

In all this I believe him to be sincere, because it is in accordance with his own personal inclinations, as well as his political interests ; and with a firm and consistent minded man to do business with, I should feel perfectly

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satisfied that these declarations would be fully acted up to. The King's character is, however, exactly wanting in those qualities, and without intending, I am convinced, either to deceive his friends or desert the principles he has avowed, I am always afraid that the baneful influence of the powerful retrograde faction that still has access to his ear may be sufficient to make him waver in his conduct, and thus not only impair his own political power but help perhaps to entail real evils and dangers upon his country. It was, if possible, to fortify his present good intentions that I was anxious to make him fully and completely aware of the sincere interest which Great Britain takes in his welfare, and of the general admiration felt in England at his conduct during recent events, and I hope I have succeeded in at least paving the way for a second attack in the same direction from Lord Minto when he arrives. I shall point out to Lord Minto the failings of the King, and I shall urge him in his conversations with the King to lay full stress upon the great importance and value of our present support of his independence, and to make him feel that he can alone expect a continuance of such assistance in return for his steady and consistent support of the rational reforms and improvements now carrying on throughout Italy.

From Lord Minto

Turin : September 29, 1847.

From what I am told I see little reason at present to apprehend any extensive or serious movements for Italian unity. Austria, by her hasty menace and the hostile attitude of her army, has given the people a more rational object in the support to be afforded to their own reforming Governments ; and the Liberal party is said to be sufficiently on its guard to discourage the display of revolutionary designs which would bring the Austrians into the field. My present impression is that a good deal will depend upon the disposition shewn by the

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Governments here and further south to do enough to satisfy reasonable men and to lay the ground for progressive reform and improvement. It seems to me that you have a right to ask Austria distinctly what are her intentions. The great force she is collecting on the frontier (including the Croatians arrived and on their march, a description of troops only called out when operations in the field are contemplated) is quite sufficient to justify the demand for explanation. The language I propose to hold with regard to Austria is that, although disapproving of her present policy and prepared to support the Liberal Governments of Italy against any attack which she might be so ill advised as to make upon their independence, it must not be supposed that we act in any hostile spirit towards the Court of Vienna, with which it is on the contrary our wish to maintain the most friendly relations as a Power in whose strength and prosperity we have obviously the deepest interest. We know the pains which will be taken to prejudice us at Vienna and elsewhere, and it is I think desirable that in the part I have to take in the affairs of Italy my language should be such as to leave no ground for misrepresentation. I have besides an undiplomatic prejudice in favour of the truth and plain dealing, and do not think the Italians will trust me the less because I do not profess to participate in all their passions, amongst which a bitter hatred of Austria is the most intense. What a simpleton I shall be thought if this last sentence is read in transition at Paris !

From Lord Minto

Turin : October 9, 1847.

I have written so much to-day to Palmerston for this messenger passing from Naples that I have neither time nor sense left to say anything more to you, though I see and hear a great deal that might afford material for a political essay. As far as I can judge everything promises as well as possible if Austria can be prevented

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from throwing things into confusion. Italy has generally recognised the conditions on which we assure her of our support, and will I trust pass safely through this first stage of her progress. But sovereigns and ministers have as much to learn as their subjects in these countries—perhaps more.

From Lord Minto

Turin : October 16, 1847.

There has been a little check here in the happy progress of affairs ; but I hope it may not lead to any serious consequences and that the King will do enough to remove some of the distrust with which he is at present regarded by the public. In central Italy all goes to a wish, and this Government must feel that it cannot safely linger too far behind its neighbours. I fortunately discovered two days ago that there was an intention of receiving me with a grand *ovation* in Tuscany, which I have put an end to, making them understand that it would entirely spoil my position and deprive me of the power of doing good. I have been remarkably well received here, and hear that I am looked for with impatience further south.

From Lord Minto

Genoa : October 19, 1847.

I left Turin very well satisfied upon the whole with the prospect of affairs there, and I hope that the King, whose own judgment is perfectly good, will not allow himself to be drawn into the danger of alienating the affections of his people by the evil influence of some about him who are more Austrian than Piedmontese in opinion.

From Lord Minto

Rome : November 7, 1847.

I have only made my first visit of introduction to Cardinal Ferretti and am to-morrow to have my first

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audience of the Pope. These forms over, I shall be able to apply myself to business, and, so far as I can judge from the little intercourse I have yet had with people here, I am likely to find abundance of good will and readiness to converse freely on any subjects we may have to discuss. There are, however, one or two points upon which I wish I were more certainly informed of your views. First with regard to the early establishment of our diplomatic intercourse with Rome, which is looked to here with the greatest interest and eagerness. I have had no difficulty in stating it to be the wish and intention of our Government to take the earliest opportunity of removing the existing obstacles to such official intercourse; but it is also proper that the Court of Rome should comprehend upon what footing our intercourse may be conducted. I apprehend that the British Minister appointed to Rome would invariably be a Protestant, and that should the Pope desire to establish a mission in London his representative to be received there must be a layman. I think this is already understood here as matter of course—at any rate it seems to me so necessary to establish the principle that I intend to stick to it in my conversation unless I should find, which I do not expect, that you differ from me at home. Next with regard to the Irish Colleges. Beyond the vague assurance of our desire to do the best we can for the Roman Catholics, I don't know enough of your intentions to enable me to say anything satisfactory on the subject, nor indeed am I sufficiently master of the question to discuss it with advantage. Pray, therefore, let me be enlightened on these matters. I do not feel the same confidence in handling little matters of domestic and parliamentary interest as in dealing with larger questions of foreign policy which can only involve a *case of war or peace*.

The sober and orderly progress of the great Italian revolution is really surprising. Neither this Government nor that of Tuscany have any power or authority

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but what they derive from the public confidence, and yet public opinion, instead of running riot as might have been expected in such circumstances, has imposed limits to its own range and exhibits a degree of moderation extremely creditable to the people and their leaders. But this is not a state of things to endure very long, for the executive is too weak to be able to administer the government to advantage, and I shall be glad to see it acquire a little more intrinsic strength, which I think it will obtain from the reformed institutions when they are set to work. All, however, depends upon the forbearance of Austria, whose interference would drive the whole population of Italy distracted. In the meanwhile Princes and Patriots and Ministers all look to England for support, and it is pleasant to see how entirely we have their confidence and how gratefully they feel the disinterested service we have done them. This gives us great and useful influence with all classes in encouraging liberal measures on the one hand, and in preaching moderation and patience on the other. I have had abundant experience of this in the different stages of my progress. All Italy as far as the Neapolitan frontier is so bound up in the same cause that whatever affects one State is regarded with the greatest interest in the others, and it is unfortunate that south of Turin we have not a mission capable of rendering them any assistance in the conduct of their affairs. The announcement of the King of Sardinia's reforms has had a very happy effect here and at Florence, where his hesitations had begun to give some uneasiness lest he should desert them, and I trust that they will also restore the confidence of his own subjects, which he was fast losing.

From Lord Minto

Rome : November 15, 1847.

You may be perfectly easy as to the tone of my dealings with the Pope, and that he shall feel, as I told him at my first interview, that I came here to give him

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support and encouragement, and not to seek advantage or assistance from him. But this is quite consistent with a complaint of his having been misled to give his sanction to a mischievous measure, and with a representation of the political activity of the Catholic clergy in Ireland of which he could not but disapprove, and which we are entitled to expect him to restrain. I endeavoured to make him understand that we are really anxious to do the best we can for the Irish Catholics, and that it would be for his and their interest that he should communicate freely with the British Government in what regards them. I told him that we had every disposition to make such arrangements respecting the Irish Colleges as ought to be satisfactory to the Catholics, and that I hoped something might be done calculated to enable him to withdraw the condemnation which he had sanctioned. In treating this as a somewhat serious matter there is no danger in making him imagine that we stand in great need of his assistance and that I came here to obtain it. Both he and the Cardinal Ferretti are such plain-dealing men that one may talk to them with little reserve and with the assurance of being understood and believed in conversing frankly with them. They know and strongly feel how much they owe to our support, and how necessary it still is to them, and I think they are quite ready to do justice to our motives. The influence of the English name is now so great in Italy that they look as much for my assistance in tempering the views of their own public as in averting danger from without, and every day brings fresh proofs of the confidence with which we are regarded by all classes in the country.

From Lord Minto

Rome : November 18, 1847.

The opening of the deliberations of the Consulta di Stato here is a great political event, and if it starts well and in sufficient harmony with the Government I shall

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feel no doubt of its success. Its members are perfectly aware of the power which it is destined to acquire, and are I believe generally disposed to await the natural and gradual growth of that influence without aiming at direct legislative authority, at least in the present condition of Italy. They are at present contending for the publicity, not of their discussions, but of their proceedings, and here they are clearly in the right; as whatever strength and support they may be able to give the Government must proceed from their own hold on the public confidence, and the only influence they can exercise over the measures of the Government must rest upon the public opinion they may bring to bear upon it. The Pope is at present extremely unwilling to admit of their publicity, and I am not quite sure if he will give way upon it. Should he stand out against it I fear that the effect will be very unfortunate, both in the Consulta itself and with the public. But I have learnt to rely strongly on Italian moderation and good sense.

From Lord Minto

Rome: January 2, 1848.

It is time I should know something of your wishes as to the time of my return. The crisis which brought me out is over, and especially all danger from without. On the other hand you may perceive that the state of Italy requires looking after, and that help is wanting for the inefficiency and weakness of some of the Governments; but then this is a state of things that may continue for a year as well as for a month, and should be permanently provided for, as may be done when you are able to send a Minister to Rome. In the meanwhile, if I am not wanted at home, I believe that my presence here may be serviceable. But at any rate I hope that you will not in the present state of things leave Rome when I quit it without the presence of some one in whom you may confide.

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From Lord Palmerston

January 11, 1848.

I quite agree with you that it would be best that Minto should stay on at Rome perhaps till Easter. Our having a mission at Rome will beyond a doubt be a blow at the influence of McHale and Co. with the Papal authorities. The presence of a Roman Minister in London might cut both ways. I can understand, however, that it would be very agreeable to the English Catholics, who would rally round him and make him a sort of Chief of their Clan.

From Lord Minto

Rome : January 16, 1848.

There has been a good deal of hesitation in the Pope and a good deal of discontent and disappointment in the public for some weeks past ; and my chief occupation has been in pressing the necessity for liberal measures and the appointment of respectable ministers upon the Pope and the Cardinal, and in preaching patience and conciliation to my Liberal friends. With regard to the latter I feel no uneasiness, as they are well aware that the success of their cause depends upon their keeping if possible on good terms with the Government and on their being able to give it their support. I have good hope also that a better Government will be formed. The newly established Council of Ministers in which they now assemble and are seen at one view presents such a ridiculous exhibition of notorious incapacity that the Pope must see the necessity for calling a few men of sense to his aid. Austria is the great bugbear to all Italians at present. They do not imagine that she is about to invade them at once, but they say (and truly) that such a force as she has assembled cannot be purely defensive, where no attack is to be apprehended, and that it must therefore be designed to take advantage of the first occasion that presents itself for an intervention in their affairs.

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From Lord Minto

Rome : January 18, 1848.

I have no time to write to you, but you will see by my letter to Palmerston how much fat there is in the fire to the southward. The Pope you will see will not suffer any violation of his territory by the passage of Austrian troops, and in this I trust we shall stand by him, as indeed I to-day gave him to understand. I wish this Sicilian and Neapolitan outbreak had not occurred to distract us here, but as it has taken place I wish it success, tho' even that will not be without its embarrassments to us, unless both parties are more reasonable than I take either of them to be. I shall be very anxious to learn your views on these matters. All Italian passion is now concentrated against Jesuits and Austrians, and even the former scarcely hold their place since the atrocious massacres of Milan and Turin. As to Louis Philippe he is almost forgotten, and must commit some great crime to recover his position in the public eye here. One advantage of the Austrian bugbear is that it has again revived the wholesome conviction in the people that their safety depends upon their keeping on good terms with their Governments.

From Lord Minto

Rome : January 23, 1848.

These Neapolitan affairs give me great uneasiness, as I see it is not unlikely that I may be called upon to take some step before it is possible for me to know your views on the state of things as it will then exist. The Pope and I agree completely in our present notions of the course to be taken. The Sicilians appear to have fairly won back their Constitution of 1812 and to be resolved to keep it. The Pope does not apprehend any danger on the Continent from this insular example, and says that the Sicilians only recover what they could claim as their right. But he is justly alarmed at the disposition

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to drive at a Constitution in Naples which if obtained would bring all Italy upon their Governments for the like. I have written strongly to Lord Napier begging him to do his best to induce the Neapolitan patriots to put up with neighbours' fare in the shape of reformed institutions. I had a very satisfactory conversation with the Pope to-day, in which he shewed more leaning to liberal institutions than he had done of late. When he talked to me of the lecture he intended to give his Ministers assembled in the new Council, I told him that amongst the other advantages of this Council was that of bringing all his Ministers before him at one view so that he could estimate their worth collectively and individually. He laughed and said: 'but there are really some good men amongst them now, though they may not all be very efficient.'

From Lord Minto

Rome: February 3, 1848.

I am within a quarter of an hour of starting for Naples and cannot write you more than a line. Sicily at present appears to be the only hitch in the way of a speedy settlement of affairs there, and I rather dread that the King may not easily be brought to consent to the only terms likely to go down with the Sicilians, a separate Parliament of their own. There is a notion that he will make an attempt to obtain an European mediation in the affairs of the two Sicilies. This would never do, and we should insist upon having the Italians left to manage their own matters for themselves. My sympathies are so strongly with the Sicilians, whose conduct has been very noble, that I hardly trust my judgment in their cause, and the conduct of the Neapolitan troops has been so atrocious that one can only feel them to be worthy of their Bourbon King. Pray let me know your views as to the degree of protection we should give the Sicilians, and what to say if Austria advances to Naples.

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From Lord Minto

Naples : February 15, 1848.

You must not think me negligent if I do not write fully and clearly, for every minute of my time is occupied in endeavours to obtain some settlement of the Sicilian affair, not in a very promising state at this moment. The accounts from Rome are unpleasant. The Pope has postponed all the measures which might have satisfied the country till they will no longer suffice ; and what is now done will be extracted by fear, and teach the people the bad lesson that they must threaten to obtain what they desire. Russia has again eagerly pressed the acceptance of a French force on the Pope for his protection, which has been peremptorily declined.

From Lord Minto

H.M.S. *Hibernia* : March 10, 1848.

We are within twenty miles of Palermo, after having as I thought settled the affairs of Sicily by obtaining nearly all that the Sicilians asked and much more than they expected. I find, however, that the French Revolution has turned the heads and raised the demands of the Palermitans, who now say that nothing less will satisfy them than the King's abdication in favour of the Prince of Salerno or some member of his family as provided by the Constitution of 1812. I intend to assume a high tone with them and to refuse to land or to treat at all with the Committee unless it at once renounces these new pretensions and returns to the temperate views which it professed in asking for my intervention, and I have little doubt of finding them tractable when they see I am in earnest. However, I need not write you my speculations on this subject, when a few hours more will enable me to tell you positively how things stand. I feel very far from easy as to the turn that affairs may now take in Italy, where I fear that

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hopes and designs only relinquished in many quarters because apparently desperate may be revived by the expectation of republican propagandism and support from France, in Lombardy and elsewhere. I have sought to persuade people more than I have quite convinced myself that this is not likely to be the policy of the new Government ; but many plausible reasons are found for the apprehension, and what alarms one set of people is more than sufficient to raise the hopes of a different set. The Pope, as you probably know, has for some time been hatching a Constitution which might have made him quite secure if sufficiently liberal and secular ; but very recently he had begun to exhibit some new hesitation which produced much dissatisfaction and distrust, and what he may now do under the influence of a new fear may come too late to satisfy people and to support the influence of the moderate party in Italy. At Naples it seems to me a toss up how things may go ; the best chance of doing well will be found in a very prompt assembly of the Parliament. The moment I get this Sicilian job settled I shall be anxious to turn my face northwards again, first because I may possibly be of some use at Rome, and still more because I look homewards with some anxiety and impatience lest Ireland should catch fire from France. I heartily wish we had two or three more *big ships* in the Mediterranean. I do not think it right at any time that we should not be superior there, but in such times as the present it is surely madness to run the risk of starting at a disadvantage.

From Lord Minto

Palermo : March 14, 1848.

You will see that I have had some difficulty in preventing the Sicilians from deposing the King, and unless he accepts the conditions now required this will inevitably be voted on the assembling of Parliament, which meets on the 25th. Nothing would have been

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more easy than a satisfactory arrangement for the government of the Kingdom of the two Sicilies but for the obstinate folly of the Neapolitan Ministers, and, I believe, the dishonesty of some of them.

From Lord Palmerston

March 17, 1848.

Minto may boast that he has retaliated on the Italian and has been able *pacis imponere morem* through the whole peninsula.

From Lord Minto

Palermo : March 26, 1848.

You may perhaps think that I have too easily relinquished the hope of attaching Sicily to the Crown of Naples, for no one without coming here can understand the intense hatred with which all classes from the Prince to the peasant regard the King and every member of his family. At one period the fear of an Austrian invasion had made them willing to submit to terms that the King ought to have clenched. But the moment the French Revolution gave them other hopes and they felt assured that they had only Naples to contend against, they formed the fixed resolution of standing out for complete independence. Nothing less than my appearance with Parker's squadron and the strong language I was entitled to hold could have obtained any recognition of the King's title ; and the life of Ruggiero Settimo, much as he is adored, and the lives of other leading members of the Provisional Government, were threatened if they should yield to my demand—which was at length only done and acquiesced in by the public as a peace-offering to England, whose friendship they looked to. When the last answer from Naples arrived to release them from this engagement it was joyfully received, though the people knew that they should again have to fight for their independence. But now nothing assuredly but an overwhelming force would induce the Government or the people to listen for a moment to any proposal tending to reunite them to the

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Crown of Naples. And although it is true that the King is individually the first object of their aversion, they also remember that their interests have always been sacrificed to those of Naples, and any connection with that country is most distasteful to them. The Government at present is likely to be well composed. The Regent is a temperate and high-minded old man, whose influence is derived from his high character alone ; but there are some able men in the Council.

From Lord Minto

Naples : April 4, 1848.

Nothing can be worse than the state of things here, and the want of any instruments for its improvement is the worst part of the case. Rogues and fools and cowards form the whole stock-in-trade of this country in the article of public men, and it is this much more than the prevalence of democratic opinion that constitutes the real danger of the Monarchy. Napier will of course write fully, and I shall leave it to him to put you in possession of all that is to be told. My Sicilians, like their neighbours, are trembling in the balance between Monarchy and Republic. The former might still have been secured when I left Palermo four days ago, and I am going to talk to the King on the subject this morning, having to make it plain to him in courteous terms that he is individually too odious to every Sicilian—man, woman or child—to be himself now accepted as their Sovereign.

P.S.—I have seen the King, and doubt much of his making up his mind in time to give the Sicilians one of his children as their King. He is, as is natural, low and uneasy on his own account at Naples.

From Lord Minto

Naples : April 6, 1848.

If the Government can be carried on till Parliament is assembled, as I now begin to hope may be the case,

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the Monarchy may be saved. I have urged the speedier assembly of Parliament, and steps have to-day been taken for that purpose, so that it will meet before the end of the month. The King's folly, insincerity and dishonesty is the greatest difficulty to be encountered. The people are bad enough, but he is the master demon. I hope you are seriously preparing for a considerable increase of our naval force. The French fleet is now at sea, quite equal if not of superior force to Parker's squadron. And you must remember that at a first start they can bring forward a few fresh ships faster than we can do, though in the end we outrun them. The equality of force at this moment which compels Parker to keep his squadron together may very probably lead to great disorders in Italy and to the sprouting up of Republics, which might have been prevented by the presence of a British line-of-battle ship or two in different parts of the coast. I am very glad to see that the French Government desires to keep well with us at present, but I have no confidence in the power of the Government nor in the honesty or discretion of its agents or officers. I am anxious to learn what has been your tone with regard to all that is passing in Lombardy. When obliged to say anything, I have condemned the aggressive measures of the King of Sardinia and the other Italian Governments who invade the Austrian territory, though we may not be disposed to take any part in the quarrel. I shall stop a few days as possible at Rome, for the state of Europe makes me feel great impatience to be amongst you again. My accounts from Rome are not very satisfactory, tho' they have a good Government there ; but Pio IX I fear does not give it fair play. On my way home I shall have the mortification of finding not a trace remaining of all the labours of my outward-bound journey.

CHAPTER XIII

THE REVOLUTION IN ITALY

II. PIEDMONT AND AUSTRIA

THE Year of Revolutions confronted Italy with even graver problems than those which Lord Minto had endeavoured to solve. The letters and dispatches of Abercromby from Turin reflected the warm sympathy with which the grant of a Constitution by Charles Albert was watched by the British Government; but the eruptions in Paris and Vienna lighted a flame in which the fair hopes of peaceful progress were to be consumed. When in March Milan rose against her Austrian masters, Charles Albert took his place at the head of the national movement. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Pope, and even the King of Naples ordered troops to the aid of Lombardy, and for a moment the whole peninsula seemed united in patriotic resolve. Austria, thoroughly alarmed, appealed to Palmerston to hold back her antagonists, but received the unexpected advice to give up her Italian possessions. A later appeal in April to arrange an armistice was accepted, but with the warning that things had gone too far for any further connection between Austria and Italy. When Charles Albert declined an armistice unless Venetia as well as Lombardy was ceded, Hummelauer was sent from Vienna to London to propose autonomy for Lombardy and Venetia under a Grand Duke, or, if need be, the cession of Lombardy. Palmerston merely reiterated his counsel to withdraw from Italy altogether. 'Italy is to Austria

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the heel of Achilles,' he declared, 'not the shield of Ajax. The Alps are her natural barrier and her best defence.'

While faint-hearted diplomats at Vienna were ready for painful sacrifices, the octogenarian Radetzky, who had fallen back on the fortresses of the Quadrilateral and received reinforcements, struck his counter-blow at Custozza on July 22 and reoccupied Milan. In the conviction that Italy possessed both the right and power to expel Austria from the peninsula, Palmerston had played for time ; but Custozza created a new situation in which the task of British diplomacy was to co-operate with France in saving as much as possible from the wreck. In June he had dismissed the suggestion of ceding the Ionian Islands to Austria as a *solatium* for the loss of her Italian possessions ; but after the victories of Radetzky he quickly discovered that Austria would not surrender an inch of soil.

Palmerston had failed to save Piedmont from the consequences of her intervention, and during the winter of 1848-9 his attention was demanded not only by the north but by the south of Italy. His sympathy with the revolt of Sicily against her Neapolitan ruler was as unconcealed as his sympathy with the revolt of Lombardy against Austria. When Lord John reminded him that Great Britain was neutral, the Foreign Secretary challenged the statement, recalled the protection afforded to the island against the cruelties of the Neapolitan troops, and endeavoured, though in vain, to avoid an apology to the King of Naples for having allowed a Government contractor to supply arms from the Ordnance Department to the rebels. Lord John and his forceful colleague agreed that the Austrians were intruders in Italy ; but, in the south as in the north, the more

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cautious temper of the Prime Minister led him to counsel a less provocative championship of the Italian cause and a more considerate handling of Austrian susceptibilities.

Despite the triumphs of Radetzky, the suppression of the revolution in Vienna, the accession to office of the resolute Schwarzenberg, and the coronation of Francis Joseph, the year 1849 dawned on an Austria confronted with a sea of troubles. Manin held out in Venice, and the revolt of Hungary revived the hopes of Piedmont. A Conference at Brussels to survey the questions threatening the peace of Europe had been discussed throughout the winter, and Colloredo was dispatched to London to prepare the ground ; but Austria explained that she could not take part if a surrender of territory was to be demanded from her, and Palmerston saw no reason for a Conference to meet at all. At this moment Piedmont suddenly denounced the armistice on March 12 and renewed the war. Radetzky, however, struck a crushing counter-blow at Novara, and the stricken King abdicated in favour of his son. Palmerston had not approved the attack, but he refused to condemn it, and endeavoured to mitigate the penalties of its failure. Behind Austria he saw in imagination the sinister figure of the Tsar Nicholas, the author, as he believed, of a gigantic scheme to destroy constitutional liberty in continental Europe. By the summer of 1849 reaction was again triumphant throughout the peninsula. The Russell Ministry had done its best to foster the twin movements of national and constitutional liberty ; but it had no intention of taking an active part in the struggle, and without foreign aid the expulsion of Austria was impossible. Yet Italian patriots had learned that they had no more disinterested friends in Europe than the

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two great Whig statesmen, and the knowledge nerved them for the struggles still to come.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : February 22, 1848.

Your private letter and Lord Palmerston's despatch acknowledging the receipt of the Proclamation of the 8th inst. reached me most opportunely, and enabled me last night to tell the King personally how highly his conduct has been approved of by the Government in England. My communication pleased him extremely, and he received with evident satisfaction the assurance that the future similarity of the institutions of the two countries would be an additional bond of union and friendship between us. I quoted to him your expression that he had behaved 'admirably.' To produce a totally new system of government in the place of institutions which have existed for nearly 800 years is no easy matter, and time must be allowed to accomplish it with any chance of success. All hands are however busily at work, and I hope that no very great length of time will elapse before the measure is completed. It is so clearly for the advantage of the Government to get out as quickly as possible from the present state of transition in which they find themselves that I lose no opportunity of urging this upon them as strongly as I can. I have no fears for the internal tranquillity of this country. The Piedmontese are by nature orderly and are not easily moved. The Genoese, from old republican recollections and having more the temperament of a southern people, are more excitable ; but even they, taking the mass, have received with satisfaction the promised 'Statuto,' and they are for the present quiet and well disposed. The Italian Press, it is to be regretted, has not been sufficiently moderate in its language as regards Austria ; but it is less violent than it was, though still capable of improvement, and I can, I think, perceive a growing impression that to excite Austria is to play her game in Italy.

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The real danger to the publick peace arises from the unjustifiable system of provocation which the Austrian authorities tolerate against the Lombards. Should an outbreak occur in Lombardy, I have very small hope that it will be possible to restrict it to a civil war in the Italian provinces of Austria. There would be an immediate rush from all parts of Italy to succour the Lombards, which none of the Italian Governments would be able to restrain, however much they might disapprove and regret such a proceeding ; and a hasty measure of this nature would unfortunately at once destroy the strong and just cause which the people and sovereigns of Sardinia, Tuscany and Rome have so gloriously supported of late. In my opinion, therefore, it is to the course which Austria may follow in her Italian provinces that we must look for the solution of the question of peace or conflict in Italy. It is impossible to describe at Vienna in too strong colours the danger that Austria runs in trying to bring on a crisis in Italy ; and those are her sincerest friends who, by stating what may possibly be extremely unpalatable truths, may help to open her eyes and shew to her the precipice to which she is apparently hurrying. Even since the affair of Ferrara the Italian policy of Austria has been ill conceived, and act after act has tended to increase the despair of the Lombards at seeing themselves more and more precluded from sharing in the liberal reforms going on in other States of Italy. A feeling of irritation has thus been engendered between the Government and the people, which has at last arrived at such a point that it is difficult to say how it is to end, or indeed what remedy can now be applied, short of violence in the one case or more extensive concessions than are likely to be given in the other.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : March 2, 1848.

One line by the Sardinian messenger to beg that you will send me as quickly as possible instructions as to the

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language I am to hold here under the present circumstances. It was not to be expected but that Sardinia should look to us, as she has formerly done, for advice and assistance in critical moments like the present, and you will not therefore feel surprise that the application has been quickly made. I think you will agree with me in thinking, notwithstanding M. Lamartine's assurances to the Diplomatick Body, that at least there is a possibility of a Continental war ; and if so this country will require support. Genoa, as a central point, must be made secure, for if that should fall into the enemies' hands the defences of this country would be completely turned, and an easy access given to the heart of Italy. The Government are arming and organising the Civil Guard ; but that which was calculated to inspire confidence and respect for the laws is, owing to the unhappy policy followed by Austria in Lombardy, causing much anxiety to the Government from the fear that the general exasperation against Austria in favour of the Lombards will not be controlled much longer, and that some outbreak may occur. I hope in the answers that Lord Palmerston may give to Count de Revel that the future policy and intentions of your Government with regard to this country in the event of her being attacked by France will be fully and clearly exposed ; for it is to Great Britain, and to her alone, that Sardinia appeals with perfect confidence in moments of difficulty or of crisis.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : March 8, 1848.

It is very agreeable to receive from you such eulogiums of the King of Sardinia as you sent me in your last, and I take care that they all go to their proper address. You must not imagine that the Ministers who resigned yesterday and who had advised the granting of a Constitution have gone out of office on any retrograde question. They had, through listlessness and want of energy and forethought, allowed the reins of Government to slip

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through their fingers ; and all at once they discovered that their influence was gone, that they were no longer of use to the King, and therefore, like honest men, they have made room for others, I hope more capable than they have proved themselves to have been. Balbo and Pareto, representing between them the Constitutional Liberal parties in Piedmont and at Genoa, have been charged with the composition of the new Administration. If they select their colleagues with judgment, they should be able to form a strong and popular Government that would have authority to enforce order and raise the character of the executive, which had fallen to a very low ebb. I still continue convinced that the great majority of the Sardinian people are steady in their attachment to the King and to the institutions which he has granted them ; but that majority requires to see that they are supported by a firm Ministry, without which the best dispositions will be eventually spoiled, and a free course will be given to the wild and exaggerated spirits which are attempting to create confusion.

You ask me for information from Lombardy. I believe that for the moment there is a lull in the strife that has been going on between the Lombards and the Austrians. This is explained by the fear that has come over the Lombards of a French invasion and consequent loss of property. I believe also, from all I hear from those who come from Milan, that the moment is propitious for granting concessions which would now rally the Italian subjects round Austria. It is, however, only a moment, which if permitted to pass by may never occur again, and in that case Austria will have but little prospect of being able to preserve her Italian provinces much longer. This I believe to be the true condition of affairs at present, and if Austria is wise she will turn it to account. I do not know whether you in England will judge of the policy of this country as I do, but it seems to me that it ought to be strictly Italian, and in conjunction with Tuscany and Rome. This country

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has taken England for its guide in its relations with France, and so long as Lamartine can find dinners, if not work, for his Parisian brethren, there is a likelihood of external peace being preserved. This secures this country on the side of France, and if she identifies herself with the rest of Italy and the maintenance of Italian independence she will be strong enough I hope to prevent her people from meddling in the affairs of Lombardy. These two frontiers safe, Sardinia as well as Tuscany and Rome will have time to consolidate their new institutions, and to place themselves upon such a footing as to enable them to present a compact and united front against all attempts at foreign intervention.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : March 16, 1848.

The members composing this new Cabinet are all more or less known for their liberal opinions. You may be certain that so long as Balbo is Minister he will steadily set his face against all idea of attacking Austria, and he will do all in his power to restrain the ardour of the populace and of the Genoese. A word in this sense from England to a new set of people would come very well.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : April 4, 1848.

We are beginning to feel the delightful effects of the neighbourhood of a French Republic in the disaffection of the Duchy of Savoy, which if not already gone from the Crown of Sardinia will go in a few days. I can have no doubt but that French republican intrigue is going on to a great extent in Piedmont, Lombardy and in the Riviera of Genoa. The results of this system may be made publick any day, and therefore, when they are so, you must not be astonished or unprepared. M. Lamartine means, I have every reason to believe, to be pacifick ;

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but he has not the power to continue so, and he will have either to quit office or allow himself to swim with the stream.

From Lord Minto

London: May 21, 1848.

I called on Prince Metternich to-day, intending it only as a visit of civility. But he made me sit down beside him, and immediately engaged in political conversation upon the state of Germany and Italy, on which he sought to state his own views and vindicate his own policy at great length in much detail. With regard to the Austrian possession of Lombardy as settled in the treaty of Vienna, he told me that the Emperor Francis (whom he described as a man of great sagacity and large views, though awkwardly unable to express his meaning in conversation) had strongly objected to the annexation of Lombardy to his dominions, feeling that it would become a source of danger and weakness rather than of strength to Austria, and therefore desiring that it should not be dissevered from Italy. That he, Metternich, agreed with the Emperor, but that Lombardy had been forced upon them by others of the Allies, and that they were compelled to take it contrary to their own opinions and their own wishes. This being the case, he said that he had proposed a system of government and administration which he believes would have been perfectly successful and satisfactory to the Lombards. 'I could only advise and propose, I could not command; I had the absolute direction in the great field of international policy, but in domestic and administrative questions the decision rested with the Council. My plan was partly adopted and partly rejected in practice.' He then proceeded to state that he had proposed to constitute a separate *Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom*, with large and liberal municipal institutions, and with a representative Constitution, to be presided over by a Viceroy (an Archduke), with native responsible ministers charged with the

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whole government and administration of the country. He proposed that the Lombard and Venetian administration should be separate and distinct, not being likely to harmonise together ; and he intended to establish at Vienna a supreme Lombardo-Venetian department to which reference might be had, and which should take cognisance of such matters as demanded the interposition of superior authority. He said that he desired to give it the character of an Italian kingdom though subject to a German sovereign, knowing that the feelings of the people were so much alive to the sentiment of Italian nationality. He said that if this design had been followed out there would have been no disaffection such as we had witnessed in Lombardy. Prince Metternich appeared acquainted with the character of most of the leading men in Italy, though I think not aware how much the moderation manifested in the early progress of the reform movement was the consequence of their influence and exertions. He also supposes the Pope to have been more of a political Liberal in spirit than is really his character.

From Lord Palmerston

June 2, 1848.

Your idea as to an arrangement for fortifying the Austrian frontier in the Tyrol is a very good one and might very likely be worked out in the course of the negotiations between Austria and Sardinia, if Austria should accept our proposed basis and should consent to treat upon the principle that she should give up Venice as well as Lombardy. But perhaps it would be better in the present stage of the business to avoid entering into details and to confine ourselves to the general principle ; besides which, if we were to suggest arrangements of this kind to Austria, she might consider us in some degree pledged to obtain them for her, and might make her consent to accept our general principle dependent upon our securing for her these particular conditions ;

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whereas on the other hand we have no grounds for supposing that the Italians would consent to these arrangements, though they might be willing to treat upon the basis of pecuniary compensation for territorial abandonment, and thus we should be hampered by a sort of preliminary pledge to one of the two parties between whom we were going to mediate, and we should no longer be in that free and impartial position which is necessary to make mediation successful. It seems to me therefore that it will be better to leave my draft as it is, confined to the general principle, and that when we come to negotiate (if we get to that point) we might leave the Austrian Government to make its own proposals.

With regard to the notion of a cession of the Ionian Islands to Austria, I would submit three conditions. First, the Ionian Islands are not a possession of the British Crown of which that Crown can dispose at its will subject only to the approval and consent of Parliament. The Ionian State is a separate political existence under the protection but not under the sovereignty of England ; and our protectorship is founded upon a treaty to which other Powers are parties. Secondly, the protectorship of the Ionian State would be of no use to Austria, and would not be exercised by her usefully to the Ionian State. The smaller islands I throw out of the account, but Corfu, which is the important port, would add nothing to the offensive or defensive strength of Austria, and would only be a drain upon her army by requiring a garrison. Again, the Ionian State consisting of islands, no Power can effectually protect it but by a naval force ; and a purely continental Power like Austria, without any navy, would be quite unable to defend it, and protection implies defence. Whatever garrison the Austrians might place in Corfu, that island would be taken by the French or the Russians whenever war should break out between either France or Russia and Austria.

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From Lord Palmerston

June 8, 1848.

Hummelauer¹ went away perfectly satisfied with my letter to him, especially with the last paragraph, in which I proposed that his arrangement about Lombardy should be extended to such portions of the Venetian territory as may be agreed upon between the parties concerned. This will of course be the whole, for the Italians will agree to nothing less ; but it saves the Austrian honour. As to the Ionian Islands, it would probably be the most natural arrangement that all of them except Corfu should be added to the Kingdom of Greece ; and except with reference to revenue none but Corfu have any value for us. But Greece must, I apprehend, be governed very differently from what it is now before any of the Ionians would chuse to become subject to its government ; and even in any case the people of the Ionian State might not like to be cut up into two parts, and the people of Corfu might not chuse to be separated from their brethren in the other islands. To give Corfu to Austria would be rather like entrusting a duckling to the protection of a respectable old hen.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : June 13, 1848.

The fall of Peschiera, the late successful affair for the Piedmontese at Goito, and now the abandonment by the Austrians of the heights of Rivoli, almost without firing a shot, are marvellous advantages for the Italian cause. These three events ought to be powerful arguments in the hands of Monsignor Morichini when urging the Austrian Government to come to terms for a final settlement of the present dispute ; and if we support him, and the object

¹ Baron Hummelauer was sent to England to ask mediation on behalf of Austria. The situation, however, was quickly changed by Radetzky's reconquest of Lombardy.

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of his mission, it is hardly probable that the Cabinet of Vienna will turn a perfectly deaf ear to such recommendations. It is perfectly just that to induce Austria to relinquish such a jewel as Lombardy and Venice she should receive some compensation for her loss. This she might find in a financial arrangement with this country, and possibly in the addition of some commercial advantages ; but she must not consider her own condition as being so good and that of the Piedmontese as being so bad as to justify her in making exaggerated demands. I do not know whether you care much that England should play the first part in helping to arrange a peace between Austria and Italy, or whether you would prefer that an Italian Sovereign should be the ostensible mover in such an affair, to which, however, England would lend her cordial but unostentatious support. I imagine, however, that you will prefer the second course, and, if so, I hope that no time will be lost in strongly supporting Monsignor Morichini's mission of peace. Ultra-liberal, almost revolutionary, opinions are, I am sorry to say, gaining too much ground here to afford a satisfactory prospect for the future. Republican leaven will out amongst the Genoese, and they find willing helpmates amongst the Lombards, who have never known what it was to have a National Monarchy to feel attached to. Between these two parties I am afraid the poor Piedmontese stand but a bad chance, and they are, I regret to say, also wanting in energy to maintain their own. I cannot help suspecting that in their hearts the Genoese and Milanese tacitly agree that they will use a Constitutional Monarchy, the King's personal popularity, and his ambitious weaknesses, so long as they may be useful for their own ends—but that the moment they cease to be so in their eyes they will dismiss him and his family with as little ceremony and regret as the French have done Louis Philippe.

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From Lord Palmerston

August 30, 1848.

I do not think that we need consider our mediation as refused. We have not yet got the Austrian answer ; and if it is only evasive, as Cavaignac expects it to be, and stating that Austria is negotiating direct with the King of Piemont, we ought to reply thereto that whatever may have taken place before our mediation was offered must be considered as of no effect since the King has accepted the mediation, and that no doubt the Austrian Government must by this time have learnt that the King accepts our mediation and therefore drops his separate negotiation. With regard to Venice it seems to me that we have to chuse whether there shall be peace or war between Austria and France, and whether we shall deliberately let France loose to settle the affairs of Italy in her own way or not. If she goes to Venice without our consent and sanction Austria will consider it an act of war, and the next step will be the entrance of the French into Lombardy. If we associate ourselves morally and politically with the move, Austria will not venture to treat it as war, but will deal with it as an element of negotiation. For my own part, thinking that the Austrians are intruders in Italy and that their expulsion would be no real injury to them and a great blessing to the Italians, and believing that if the French were to enter Italy the Austrians would be swept clean out of it, I should on that account be rather glad than sorry to see a French army cross the Alps ; but then if it went in on its own account it would of course turn its success to its own account, and would settle all matters as the French Government might chuse. We should be put upon the shelf and England would cut but a sorry figure in Europe. My own opinion is that, if France is to act anywhere in Italy, she ought to be tied up by a previous agreement with us as to the extent and object of her action. I think such a course is the only one safe for Europe and honour-

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able and secure for England, and that if we shrink from such a course we shall be the cause of much evil.

France now says that if the mediation is declined she must send a garrison to hold Venice, that she will do it without us if we prefer it, but that she prefers doing it with our concurrence. Do we believe what she says or not? If we do not, then let us give her a civil answer, and take the chance of our incredulity being well founded. But if we believe she will go on, and that is my belief, we must say something about it. You propose that we should say that she has a right to do so if she chuses; she will probably reply by asking whether we object or not. What shall we answer? That we have no objection, I presume.

From Lord Minto

September 16, 1848.

I fear Sicily is to become the scene of a very savage war. Messina I see has fallen, and it is probable that other towns on the coast may share the same fate if attacked with the superior force of ships and of field artillery which the Neapolitans possess. Beyond this I do not think they will make much impression, and I look upon the conquest of the island as quite impossible. I saw your last note to Palmerston on this subject written before you left town, which gave me great pleasure; but I fear the most valuable part of it was lost sight of in the despatch he wrote—I mean the intimation that we could not suffer Sicily to be ravaged by war. Palmerston at that time thought it possible (which I did not) that the Sicilians might be induced to take back the King if he gave them good terms; but the communications subsequently received from Palermo have probably convinced him that there is no chance of effecting such an arrangement unless indeed under the pressure of something approaching a conquest of the country. I have letters from the President Ruggiero Settimo and others deprecating any attempt on our part to urge their acceptance

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of the King himself, or of any member of his family, or of the House of Bourbon, which they declare to be utterly impossible, preferring any length and severity of suffering to which they may be destined rather than subjection to that hated race. I am a good deal distressed and mortified both as a Minister and an Englishman that we should have allowed this invasion to take place, but I hope it is not yet too late to stop further bloodshed and save our own honour, as well as to prevent the establishment of an hostile interest which might be so dangerous to us in Sicily.

From Lord Palmerston

September 26, 1848.

Since I wrote to you yesterday I have had a long conversation with Beaumont upon various matters, and among others upon our negotiation about to take place for mediation between Austria and the Italians. He said that Cavaignac is extremely anxious that Normanby should be our agent in that matter ; that Normanby and he are on the most confidential terms ; and that Normanby's appointment would give great satisfaction to everybody at Paris ; that all parties would feel sure that there was cordial co-operation between him and the French agent ; and that even if we should fail in accomplishing all we wish, which Cavaignac thinks likely, everybody in France would at least be satisfied that every possible effort had been made. I could not but yield to the force of these arguments, and it must be admitted that, in a negotiation in which perfect good understanding is requisite between the agents of the two countries, much advantage may be derived from our employing a person who like Normanby has been in personal intercourse with the public men at Paris during all the late events, and who enjoys their good will and confidence.

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To Lord Palmerston

October 8, 1848.

I cannot but agree with you that the Italian mediation is full of difficulties. I need not discuss them, and will therefore confine myself to an answer to your questions.

1. I think Normanby or Lord Minto both unexceptionable. But Lord Minto would be very unwilling to undertake a mission to which he cannot see a prospect of favourable results either to England or to Europe. I should be inclined therefore to urge the nomination of Normanby. If the Queen still objects, you might name Lord Minto to her, and propose it for his consideration if she agrees.

2. I agree to the opinion of Gen. Cavaignac that Rome would be a good place for the conferences. Bologna or Pisa might do, but not so well.

3. I think the parties who met in conference regarding Belgium, namely Prussia and Russia, might be told that we should be ready to admit them to the conferences if they wished it. When met, the Four Powers, or the Five, might hear any State which could plead that its interests were affected by the proposed changes. The main subject of the conferences should be the proposal of mediation by England and France to Austria, and the reply of Austria accepting that mediation. The affairs of Naples and Sicily will form a second subject for the conference, and the King of Naples and the Sicilian Parliament should both be heard in support of their respective claims.

From Ralph Abercromby

Turin : November 19, 1848.

It is a long time since I have troubled you with a letter, but in the present state of affairs in Italy I do not hesitate to trespass upon your time. You will have learnt from my official correspondence the fact of F.M. Radetzky's decree laying contributions upon the rich

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Lombards. You will have remarked that these contributions are not regulated by any fixed or avowed rule, and the amount to be paid by each individual has therefore been arbitrarily decided by the Marshal and his agents. In short, it was hardly possible to have devised a measure better calculated to enable the Marshal to work the ruin of the aristocracy of Lombardy, if such should be his will, than the one he has now published. I hope that the mediating Powers will feel justified in interfering to prevent so harsh a decree from being completely executed. That such should be the case can only be considered fair, for since the interposition of the offer of mediation the Italians have abstained from all prosecution of their plans; and whether they were really likely to have proved successful or not does not as far as they are concerned affect the question, for under the doubt they have unquestionably the right to argue that they might have been able to place themselves in a better condition than they are, whereas it is hardly possible to be in a worse one than they now are in.

From Ralph Abercromby

November 22, 1848.

I was not able to send this letter on the day I commenced it, and I now finish it after learning the horrible crime committed at Rome,¹ and the events which have followed it. The case of Italy is rendered by all these circumstances more and more complicated. Those who are desirous of avoiding a general war will have to turn an observing eye to Italy and her concerns, for there lies the real seed of war. If it begins in this peninsula it will be hopeless I fear now to prevent its spreading further. The general 'malaise' is getting too great to be borne, and although I admit that the remedy is violent and possibly worse than the disease, such is the present disposition of men's minds,

¹ Rossi, the Prime Minister of Pio Nono, was murdered November 14.

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that rather than remain in the present provisional condition they will be ready to embrace any violent and reckless project. They are like troops kept under fire, but not allowed to act ; after a while flesh and blood will stand it no longer, and though they know they are doing wrong and perhaps endangering the success of a well combined plan they will rush on in defiance of orders. The Government here will do what they can to keep the peace as long as possible ; but with all that is taking place around them I will not answer that they will succeed in their object much longer, unless they get help and encouragement by some positive result of the mediation. The two Powers should consider that Sardinia has accepted certain bases ; that she has acted fairly under the engagements she entered into with the mediating Powers ; that the same cannot be said of Austria, who has always declined the bases and endeavoured to evade her engagements ; and that notwithstanding this Sardinia has neither been liberated from her engagements nor had the offer of modified bases, nor has she as yet derived any one benefit from the interference of the two Powers, for the armistice was made and her frontiers secured before it was possible for the two Courts to come into action. We have had some small attempts at getting up a democratic movement here, but hitherto without success. The people are however being worked upon by the revolutionists, refugees and voluntary emigrants from other countries, and it is a dangerous game in these days to count too long upon the stubborn resistance of a population to the effects of insidious intrigues. I can only repeat what I have said above, that if Italy is to be saved from becoming a prey to anarchy and confusion, and in consequence the cause of endangering the peace of Europe, England and France, who have taken her interests in hand, cannot too urgently press forward the final arrangement of her affairs. There is also to be recollected that Sardinia is the only country in Italy with the exception of Naples that has anything like an efficient

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Government. If this country is allowed to sink in the present struggle, Italy is at the mercy of France ; for with the destruction of this country follows inevitably that of the rest of this peninsula.

From Lord Lansdowne

December 29, 1848.

As the meeting of Parliament approaches I am getting very anxious, as I am sure you must be, to see our relations with all the transactions depending in Europe in a state which can be clearly explained and defined. I feel convinced that Austria will never be induced to abandon her hold upon Lombardy, either for the profit of such a sovereign as Charles Albert, or to see a republick constructed close to her frontier whilst her arms are victorious, nor is it to be expected that she should do more than loosen the tie which connects its administration with the central Power.

From Lord Palmerston

January 4, 1849.

I have received your letter of yesterday about our interference between the Neapolitans and the Sicilians. There might have been a fair question whether we should or should not have adopted Parker's unauthorised act of interference when first we heard of it ; but we decided, and I think quite rightly, to adopt it, and in conjunction with the French Government to found upon the armistice thus enforced a negotiation for the purpose of endeavouring to bring the contending parties to a friendly settlement of their differences. The armistice was established by the joint action of the two Admirals ; the negotiation was to be carried on by the joint action of the two Governments. The only justification of the interference to enforce an armistice was the determination to found upon it a negotiation ; and taking this view of the matter the Cabinet determined that, if and when the negotiation should fail, the interference should cease, and the parties

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should be left to fight it out between each other. But on the other hand the very adoption of the enforcement of an armistice with a view to negotiation implied an intention to continue that enforcement while the negotiation should be going on. In fact there can be no negotiation by mediation without an armistice, and even principals, when readily disposed to treat for peace, begin by establishing a suspension of hostilities. Now so far are we from having come to the end of this negotiation, that as yet we have no knowledge even of its beginning. The French Government, as you say, are unwilling to continue armed interference beyond the time necessary for negotiation, but I do not understand them to wish to withdraw from the negotiation before there has been time to see what prospect it holds out ; and at all events we should be setting them a very bad example if we were to send out, in a matter in which we are engaged conjointly with them, orders revoking arrangements established in concert with them without having any previous communication with them on the subject.

From Lord Palmerston

January 5, 1849.

With regard to the North Italy mediation it has long been quite certain that Austria will not give up an inch of Lombardy. We have done all we can to persuade her, but neither England nor France (as I conceive) have the slightest intention of forcing her to do so, at least at present ; for as to France what she may be led to do hereafter is another matter. But in the present temper of Austria and Piedmont and in the incompatible state of their respective pretensions, peace could scarcely be re-established between them without further conflict unless by the interposition of mediating Powers. The meeting of the negotiators has been delayed by events in Austria and the change of President in Paris, but we must now press all parties to send their envoys to Brussels. With respect to the arrangement between Naples and

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Sicily I agree with Lord Lansdowne that if the King of Naples will be satisfied with a limited garrison to hold Messina, the Sicilians ought to consent to such terms.

To Lord Palmerston

January 6, 1849.

I have no hesitation in saying that I think you are quite right in the objection you make to my writing to Parker without previous communication with you. But I got alarmed at the danger of an 'untoward event' taking place without its being intended by anyone. Indeed some good arose from Navarino, and there was some purpose in view, but a collision at Palermo would lead to no good result whatever. We might separate Sicily from Naples by a cannonade; but to reconcile Naples and Sicily by force of arms is impossible. What most requires explanation is the want of previous concert with France. But as three of Admiral Baudin's fleet are laid up for the winter, it is clear that she likewise is not prepared for hostilities.

To Sir Charles Wood

January 18, 1849.

The attention of Palmerston was called to the question of the guns for Sicily, and he told Minto he should enquire into the facts. You had better either send the papers to Palmerston, or desire G. Anson to send them to him. It will be argued that the permission to the merchant was an act favouring one party against the other. It certainly was so. In the case of Don Pedro and Don Miguel we did a good deal more, and yet Lord Grey concluded that we maintained neutrality (June 3, 1833): 'The question here was whether permitting British merchants to supply both the belligerents with British stores and *ammunition* compromised the neutrality of this country? He maintained that individuals might be permitted to supply *both the belligerents* with any of those articles which constitute the *material of War*,

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provided they were permitted equally to supply both belligerents.' The only question here is whether, in permitting a British merchant to withdraw warlike stores from our arsenals, Palmerston went beyond the line laid down by Lord Grey. It would have been more prudent to refuse, but still the amount of assistance given was far more in the case of Portugal than in that of Sicily. If Grey therefore condemns this policy, he can hardly refrain from condemning his father's conduct in 1833.

From Lord Lansdowne

January 21, 1849.

I agree with you that the delivery of the guns as stated with a knowledge of the object of the application cannot be denied to be to that extent a decided breach of neutrality, as much so as the letting Ledru Rollin's propagandists obtain arms from the arsenal at Lille was an act of hostility to Belgium. I think the mode you suggest, that of a frank explanation and apology, the best way out of the difficulty, and only wish it could have been given sooner, as it will be said to be done in fear of Parliament meeting. I was told some time ago that a rumour prevailed that we had given arms to the Sicilians, which this explains; but I thought it so little likely to have any foundation that I paid no other attention to it than to express my entire disbelief.

To Sir Charles Wood

January 23, 1849.

I have received Palmerston's proposed dispatch respecting Naples and Sicily. I shall make my corrections in it and ask him to bring it before the Cabinet on Friday, as you could not come up on Thursday. You must have left the dispatches unread, or you would have known that we had saluted the Sicilian flag, and had advised a Sardinian in preference to a Tuscan Prince. It would not do of course to bring every question before the Cabinet, or we might spend half our time in discussing

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Army Estimates, or the interest on Exchequer Bills. The turning point was whether we were prepared to acknowledge a Prince as King of Sicily in possession independently of Naples, and that the Cabinet decided in the affirmative.

From Lord Palmerston

January 25, 1849.

This Dispatch and these private letters which have just reached me from Normanby contain serious matter. I have no doubt and indeed for some time past have clearly seen that Russia is the directing influence at Vienna at the present moment ; and it is highly probable that the Emperor of Russia wishes to drive France to the wall. He thinks France disunited, embarrassed by pecuniary as well as by political difficulties, and unable to make any great military exertion ; on the other hand he has got his army all on the frontier and wound up to the highest point of efficiency. He cannot long keep it at that pitch for many reasons, of which expense is one ; and he probably thinks that by getting up a war with France he could in conjunction with Austria get military occupation of Germany and Italy, and thus tread out and utterly, for a time at least, extinguish every spark not only of republican but even of constitutional flame. What the ultimate result of such a tilting match might be it would be a bold thing to foretell, but that its immediate effects would be most calamitous there can be no doubt. As to the questions put by the French Government I suppose we must say that we cannot give support of any kind unless we were prepared to go all lengths ; and that Parliament would not vote the means for war unless British interests were directly concerned ; that however we will endeavour to inspire peaceable sentiments at Vienna.

From Lord Palmerston

January 28, 1849.

I have received this from King Leopold. The state of the case with regard to the Pope as far as I under-

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stand it is that he gave last May a Constitution to his subjects, he having at that time a politically liberal confessor. That man died, and he took another who is a political bigot and who has persuaded him that he has swerved from his religious duties by granting what he has done to his subjects. In this state of things a question arose as to whether all the offices of the State should be open to laymen or whether as he insisted foreign affairs and public education should necessarily be confided to ecclesiastics. Then came the quarrels between Rossi and the Clubs, the murder of Rossi, the further violence against those who were supposed to be engaged in conjunction with Rossi in goading the Pope into retrograde measures, and lastly the Pope's flight to Gaeta at the instigation of some of the Foreign Ministers, but as to the necessity of which some doubt seems to exist. The answer which I should be disposed to give would be that the best course for the Pope to pursue would be to negotiate with the Ministers at Rome who still carry on the Government in his name, and to do this either from Gaeta or from Civita Vecchia ; but it would probably be from the latter place, which is fortified, if he had a small force of his own on which he could depend, or some ships of war of friendly Powers lying off the place. He would probably be able to come to some understanding with this Government at Rome if he means fairly and does not want to take back what he has given ; and it would be very unwise of him to think of doing so, because to do so would be to lay the foundation for inevitable disturbance.

From Lord Palmerston

March 6, 1849.

This notion of a European Congress to settle all pending matters and to modify the Treaty of Vienna so as to adapt it to the interests and necessities of the present time sounds well enough to the ear, but would be difficult and somewhat dangerous in its execution.

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First in regard to pending matters, some of them relate to parties who did not sign the Treaty of Vienna and who perhaps might not chuse to submit their affairs to the decision of the new Congress ; and the new Congress would not have the power and assumed right which recent conquest vested in the Congress of 1814-1815. At that time all Europe may be said to have been occupied by the armies of the allies. Nations counted for nothing, sovereigns submitted to the decisions of the Congress, and its resolves became easily law. But nowadays sovereigns count for little, and nations will submit to no external dictation without the actual employment of overruling force ; and a Congress might not find it easy to give effect to its resolutions without establishing a European *gendarmerie*. Then in regard to France, the notion of modifying the Treaty of Vienna implies some intention of asking for cessions to France which the other Powers would not be disposed to consent to. If the modifications in question related to the past only, and were to be stipulations giving a European sanction to violations heretofore committed of the Treaty of Vienna, such as what has been done about Poland and Cracow, neither England nor France would much like to give their sanction to things which they have protested against and condemned. If the proposed modifications relate to future changes of still existing arrangements, it seems to me that such a chapter had better not be opened. On the whole therefore I should be for giving a civil but declining answer, pointing out the many difficulties which would arise in such a course.

From Lord Minto

March 25, 1849.

We have endeavoured ineffectually to reconcile the Sicilians to such conditions as the King of Naples desires to impose upon them. I propose that we should now call upon the King to give the same terms that he authorised me to convey to Sicily last March. We are

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entitled to make this demand. It was on the invitation of the King that our negotiation with the Provisional Government of Palermo was then undertaken.

It was at the earnest solicitation of the King that I consented personally to convey to Palermo certain decrees embodying conditions which I might hope to induce the Provisional Government to accept, and which would have been accepted but for the treachery and bad faith of the Neapolitan Government, which produced their rejection before my arrival at Palermo. I had been detained a whole day waiting for the decrees in question which were sent to me about nine o'clock at night, when I instantly embarked and sailed for Sicily. These documents were inclosed in a sealed packet addressed to Don Ruggiero Settimo ; and no copy of them (which I had desired to have) was communicated to me, although I of course concluded they must be conformable, as they proved, to the arrangements agreed to in the council of the day before. Satisfactory as these arrangements appeared to me, there was much in them which I knew to be unpalatable to the Sicilians, but to which I felt assured that I should be able, in confidential communication with the leading members of their Government, to reconcile them ; and it was for this reason that I consented to be myself the bearer of the proposal. No sooner, however, was my back turned than the Neapolitan Government hastened to publish these decrees in its newspapers, and transmitted them by a steamer for circulation throughout the Island, unaccompanied by any explanation whatever. The consequence was inevitable, and on my arrival at Palermo I found that the decrees (which I there saw for the first time) had already been rejected by popular acclamation. Some of the objections made to them were such as I could at once have removed in private communication, proceeding from a misunderstanding of the purpose of the King, and from offence taken at certain appointments which had in truth been made in the belief that they were

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desired in Sicily, but which I could have assured them would not be persevered in if distasteful to the public. The Provisional Government had no power of resisting the decision which the nation in arms had pronounced ; and it required three days of my presence before Palermo, with the imposing attitude of our squadron, to enable the General Committee, still at great personal hazard of their lives, to announce their recognition of the King and of the union of the two Crowns, with some modification of the conditions he had proposed to them. This modified proposal was sent by me to Naples. I was kept waiting ten days for any answer from the Neapolitan Government which when it arrived was a positive rejection of the Sicilian demands. The Commander of the Neapolitan steamer which brought me this decision, although asked by Sir William Parker to give him time to communicate with me on shore and to enable me to forward my letters to Lord Napier, would not wait even a quarter of an hour, but instantly proceeded on his return to Naples.

I have repeated this long narrative because it may be said that, the Sicilians having rejected the terms we proposed to them this time twelve months, we are not entitled to call upon the King of Naples to renew his offer. Now it must be remembered that after obtaining the conditions agreed to in the Council of the 6th March I consented myself to proceed *to Palermo to treat with the Provisional Government on the terms* of the decrees which were confided to my hands, only to be promulgated on their acceptance, which I should have obtained but that the Neapolitan Government by an unexampled act of treachery took the negotiation out of my hands which I was already on my way to conduct for them and to which my Government was through me a party. I say therefore that the King of Naples having applied to us to negotiate for certain conditions with his Sicilian subjects, and having interposed to defeat that negotiation which we had undertaken, we are now entitled to demand that

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he should enable us to resume it if we still see any prospect of success. I say nothing here of other grounds on which I feel that we owe it to our honour and our interest to take even a stronger course than is here proposed, because I have already sufficiently expressed my sentiments on that subject.

From Lord Palmerston

March 27, 1849.

We have given the King of Sardinia pepper and mustard enough to make a devil of him, if he had not in all probability already bedeviled himself; but as on the one hand we have not in our communications with him scolded the Austrians, so also it seemed to me unnecessary and perhaps not useful but the contrary to scold him in our communications to Austria. The real truth is that the Austrians have purposely and studiously goaded him on to commit what at Vienna and Petersburg they called some *étourderie* which might enable them to settle matters 'convenablement,' and it would not do credit to our discernment nor tend to make the Austrians moderate in their success if we were to let them think that we do not understand their drift, or if we echoed back in our dispatch the abuse which they have heaped upon their antagonist.

From Lord Minto

March 31, 1849.

There are two courses by which the restoration of order in Central Italy may be effected—by an Austrian and Neapolitan invasion, or by the friendly mediation and good offices of England and France. The evils of the first course are obvious, in the violence attending it, in the desperate measures it may provoke, in a practical re-establishment of Austrian domination in Italy, and in the permanent discontent and disaffection to ensue. The second course is recommended by its conciliatory character, by its regard for Italian independence, and by

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the honourable position which England would thus occupy. We are entitled in respect of the great political interests involved in the question to object to hostile invasion till pacific overtures have failed. The revolutionary Governments of Rome and Tuscany, abandoned by their sovereigns, are now the Governments *de facto* of those States by the will of the people ; and a great distinction is to be made between the right which may be admitted in an existing Government to call in foreign aid against domestic enemies, and the right of an exiled sovereign to the undisturbed benefit of such aid for his restoration. We might now object to an Austrian or Russian invasion of France to place Louis Philippe or Henry V on the throne, though we might not have felt ourselves entitled to object to any succour which Louis Philippe might have sought for to maintain his authority.

From Lord Palmerston

April 4, 1849.

If Radetzky has not inspired the Piedmontese with a determination to remain quiet and not to attack Austria again, I am quite sure that no exhortations of ours can be of any avail ; but whatever may be the violence of some speakers in the Turin Parliament, we know that the new King and his Government are resolved upon maintaining peace. Our efforts therefore need only be directed to the matter for which alone they can be wanted, and that is to mitigate the severity with which the Austrians may be inclined to vent their resentment against their conquered antagonists, and to dissuade the Austrians from a military occupation which might bring on a danger of collision between them and the French, or which at all events might afford the French a pretence for corresponding occupations, which it is for our interest and for that of Austria to prevent. When I spoke to Colloredo the other day about the possible occupation of Savoy by a French force, he said that such an occupation if likely to be permanent or lasting would be highly

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injurious to Austria because Savoy would give to France the keys of Germany ; and I then told him that Guizot had said the other day in presence of a person who repeated it to me that if a French force once entered Chambery no French Government ought or would be able afterwards to evacuate that place. If these considerations are just, it is not merely Sardinian interests but European interests that we are caring for when we recommend moderation to Austria.

From Lord Minto

The Hague : April 6, 1849.

Has Palmerston said anything to you of an opinion he expressed to me last Tuesday that we ought to insist upon a free and separate constitution for Sicily, even though the King should succeed in conquering it? This is no more than what Castlereagh *professed* to have stipulated for and secured as necessary for our honour. The decrees taken over by Parker really secured nothing, and, all the taxes and revenue being fixed, there would be no reason for the King's assembling the Parliament any more than he has done since the year 1815. I found Lansdowne quite of opinion with me that it is extremely desirable if possible to bring about an amicable arrangement at Rome and Florence, instead of leaving the restoration of the Pope and the Grand Duke to be effected by Austrian bayonets and thus re-establishing the Austrian protectorate over the peninsula. The mere presence of a French force on the coast would not alter the character or the consequences of the proceeding, being only, like the former occupation of Ancona, an obstacle to any territorial aggrandisement, which Austria does not contemplate at present.

To Lord Palmerston

April 13, 1849.

I have received your amended drafts, together with another to Lord Ponsonby, and I am sorry to say I still

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feel many objections to the former and entirely dissent from the last. My reasons go to the substance as well as to the tone of these dispatches, and I will state them without controverting the general views contained in your private letter. In the first place, I do not think we shall be acting the part of a friend to Sardinia by meddling with the negotiations at Verona, farther than by general counsels of moderation to Austria. It is the obvious interest of Sardinia to obtain peace as speedily as possible. Next, I do not think that a contribution of 70 millions of lire (about £2,300,000 I believe) is very immoderate. Borrowing the money at 5 per cent. with a sinking fund, the whole annual cost to Sardinia will be under £150,000 a year. I cannot conceive that half the expense of the Italian war, twice renewed, will be defrayed to Austria by this contribution.

I object also to the comparison of a contribution levied on England of 50 millions. I do not know what proportion the interest of the debt in Piedmont bears to the expenditure, or whether it is like ours, as three to two. But this materially affects the question. Nor do I know that with a victory in the plains of Kent, and London open to them, the French would be content with less than 50 millions—about a third of what we spent in the single year 1815. Passing by, however, all this criticism, I think it is evident that this dispatch, and still more the dispatch relating to Lombardy and its nobles, are calculated to irritate and estrange Austria, and not to induce her to yield to our advice. Now this course I hold to be fundamentally erroneous. Austria is our ally as well as Sardinia. She has no reason to quarrel with us; on the contrary, if pressed by the neighbourhood of Russia, she must look to us for support. But if our language to her is insulting; if we are to remind her of her misdeeds three years ago in Galicia, and threaten her with the Press of Europe; if, instead of pointing out to her her true interest calmly and courteously, we are to omit all mention of such a concession as Radetzky has made in

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regard to Alexandria, and take occasion to reproach her bitterly for the language of General Hess, she *must* then, or at all events she *will* then, throw herself into the arms of Russia, and the advances of that Power into the heart of Europe will be promoted by our own language and our own acts. Some alterations in the dispatch about the Congress will satisfy me. I only wish the question to be left open ; and I am glad you now see that Prussia will not follow Austria with respect to Italian affairs so implicitly as you supposed last year. A concert between France, Austria, Sardinia, and Naples, approved of by us, might settle all Italian difficulties.

I send this letter to Lansdowne, that he may give you his opinion as well as mine on this important subject. I have supposed all through that we keep firmly to our French alliance, which is the corner-stone of our present policy.

From Lord Lansdowne

April 13, 1849.

From the general course of policy described in Palmerston's private letter to you I not only do not dissent but think it the best and safest we can adopt, as pointing to two great objects. First, the maintenance of a perfect understanding and concert with the Government of France, which as long as it exists must have its weight both in the East and in the South. Second, the prevention of designs (which latterly every day has made more palpable) that Russia entertains of establishing an entire controul over the Danubian provinces, equivalent to their annexation. To accomplish, however, this last most important object it is evident that we must not only be secure of French co-operation, but give Austria neither reason nor pretence for withholding that resistance which under any other circumstances it would have been considered her obvious interest to oppose to the schemes of a Power whose friendship is so full of danger to her ; and I am therefore quite of opinion that no expression should be used or opinion conveyed to her calculated to

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make her believe that we have considered her, or consider her now, as less our ally than any other State, and that we have not her power and interests at heart as much as ever. It is not unnatural that, after so much success following so much disaster, she should be in a susceptible mood. I am assured that she might come to a settlement with Hungary at once if she will not persist in annexing it entirely to the Imperial Crown, which would be a far better policy for her than owing a nominal and insecure possession of it to Russia. In short all Powers but Russia have now a common interest if they can be made to feel and act upon it.

From Lord Palmerston

July 20, 1849.

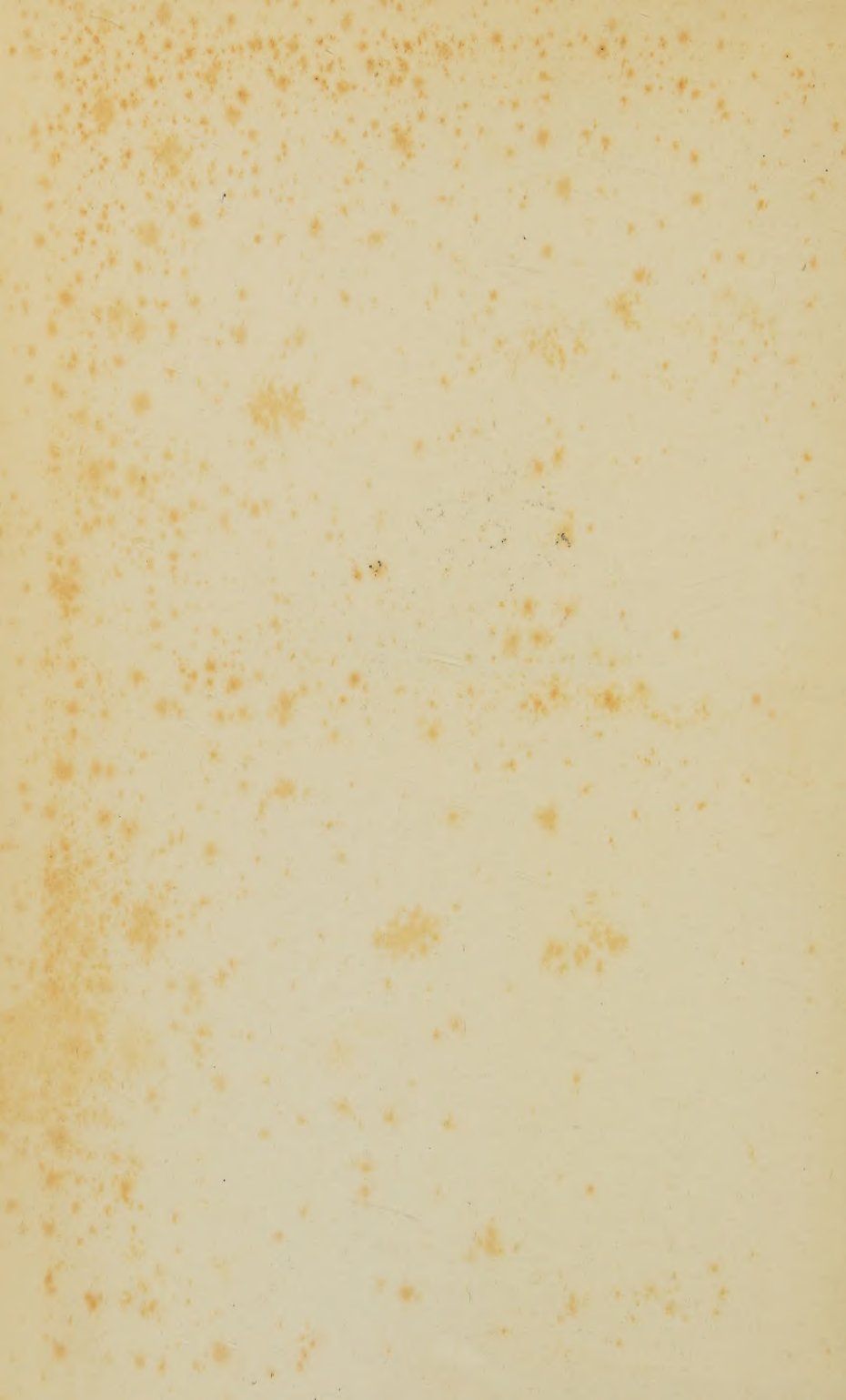
As you persist in your objection to my Draft to Ponsonby, I of course withdraw it, but I do so intirely against my own opinion and under protest. You say that 'if Piedmont is in the right it is still not a question upon which she ought not to break off the negotiation.' But who said it was? Not I, in the draft to Ponsonby. In the first place the opinion expressed in that draft is to be conveyed not to Piedmont but to Austria, and that opinion is simply that the Piedmontese Government might reasonably object to Bruck, and that it would be more in accordance with the ordinary usage of independent States that Parma and Modena should appoint subjects of their own. Surely this is not breaking off a negotiation. You say we have got a substantial benefit for Piedmont by a reduction of the amount of money she is to pay; that is true, but how did we get it? Only by friendly representations and remonstrances with Austria; and in proportion as she found that we and France took an interest in favour of Piedmont, in that proportion Austria gave up step by step portions of the large sum which she began by declaring that she would not diminish by a single franc. But she has not yet come down to what Piedmont can or will engage to pay. I speak not

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of the difference of 5 million of francs which they might perhaps toss up for, but of the vague and indefinite demands of compensation for private losses, and for account of the two Duchies, demands which might be swelled to any indefinite amount in addition to the payments to be made to Austria for war expenses. The more interest we appear to take in favour of Sardinia on the other points in discussion, the more likely Austria is to relax further in these pecuniary demands. The conclusion of a peace between Austria and Piedmont is certainly desirable, but it is also desirable that the conditions should be fair for Sardinia. Sardinia has strong claims upon us on the score of antient alliance, more so than Austria ; for the Sardinian Family made great sacrifices for its alliance with us, while Austria made a profit by abandoning her alliance with us. England is at present the only real friend that Sardinia can look to, for France has an interest in weakening Sardinia, or at least fancies she has, just as much as Austria, the real truth being that both ought rather to see that their real interest lies the other way.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

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